LIVES OF THE FRIAR SAINTS

SAINT
THOMAS AQUINAS

Rome. Italy.
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THE FRIAR SAINTS SERIES

Editors for the Franciscan Lives
The Very Rev. Fr. OSMUND, O.F.M., Provincial, and C. M. ANTONY

Editors for the Dominican Lives
The Rev. Fr. BEDE JARRETT, O.P., and C. M. ANTONY

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

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"DIVUS THOMAS QUEM DISCIPULUS E VIVO EXPRESSIT"
FROM PORTRAIT NOW IN COLLEGIO ANGELICO, ROME,
BY UNKNOWN ARTIST, ALMOST CONTEMPORARY.

SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS

OF THE ORDER OF PREACHERS

(1225-1274)

A BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY OF THE ANGELIC DOCTOR

BY

FR. PLACID CONWAY, O.P.

WITH FIVE ILLUSTRATIONS

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PREFATORY NOTICE.

THE first two volumes of the "Friar Saints" Series now published will be followed at short intervals by four more "Lives," two at a time, Dominican and Franciscan together. Should the first six "Lives" prove successful they will be followed by a second set of six. The order of publication will probably be as follows :—

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The "Friar Saints" Series, which has received the warm approval of the authorities of both Orders in England, Ireland, and America, is earnestly recommended to Tertiaries, and to the Catholic public generally.

The Master-General of the Dominicans, at Rome, sending his blessing to the writers and readers of the "Friar Saints" Series, says: "The Lives should teach their readers not only to know the Saints, but also to imitate them".

The Minister-General of the Franciscans, Fr. Denis Schuler, sends his blessing and best wishes for the success of the "Lives of the Friar Saints".

F. OSMUND, O.F.M., PROVINCIAL,
F. BEDE JARRETT, O.P.,
C. M. ANTONY,

Editors.

PREFACE.

"GOD is wonderful in His saints" (Ps. LXVII. 36). A saint's life is one of God's most wonderful products, because it is the development of the Divine life within the natural man, and in no common measure.

Saintliness is the heroism of goodness, or holiness risen to perfection, making its subject to be within and without a man of God. But besides the common perfection which comes of grace, there is stamped on each of God's servants some special feature of the Divine attributes, and this forms the genius of the individual. In St. Thomas Aquinas it is Divine Truth which shines forth within and without, in the lustre of learning and teaching, so that the words of the Psalmist are verified in his life: "Thou hast laid bare to me the deep and hidden things of Thy Wisdom" (Ps. L. 7). He was the hive of the world's honey of all ages.

Years are but as a day with God, hence, a gracious life may be presented for our contemplation as He evolved it, in its periods of Morn, and Noon, and Evening, followed by the Night, when after toil it passed into glory. This memoir is based on the accounts left by two of the saint's brethren, once his disciples, William de Tocco and Ptolomeo de Lucca, who to their personal witness added the Reports of the Commissions held by three Cardinals in Rome, and by the Archbishops of Naples and Capua, and the Bishop of Viterbo in their respective dioceses, on the holy doctor's decease. Further details have been gleaned from the pages of Père Touron, "Vie de Saint Thomas d'Aquin," issued in quarto in 1741; also from materials supplied in the life of Blessed Albert, who was the saint's chief teacher.

Such a biography is especially opportune in our day, on the revival of scholastic learning in the domains of Philosophy and Theology, of which St. Thomas was the highest exponent, while he stands supreme as the patron of the Christian Schools.

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THE Holy Father has expressed his great pleasure and satisfaction that the "Friar Saints" Series has been undertaken; and wishes it every success. He bestows "most affectionately" His Apostolic Blessing upon the Editors, Writers, and Readers of the whole Series.

PART I. : MORN.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH AND EARLY EDUCATION.

The noble Aquino family could boast of a descent through four centuries from the Lombard Princes, besides being allied with the Sovereign houses of Europe in the thirteenth century. The family name was a territorial one, which in Latin and French idioms of speech appears as Aquinas and d'Aquin. St. Thomas was born in the Castle of Rocca Secca, perched high in the mountains, some seven miles from Aquino which lies in the plain below, in the Campagna Felice of the Kingdom of Naples. He first saw the light in the opening days of the year 1225, less than four years from the death of St. Dominic. Landulf, his father, was nephew to the Emperor Frederick I; he belonged to the noble house of Sommacoli, and was Count of Aquino, Lord of Loreto, Acerra, and Belcastro. His mother, Theodora Carraciola, Countess of Teano in her own right, was sprung from the Norman Princes. St. Thomas, their third son, was

cousin to the Emperors Henry VI and Frederick II, and closely allied to the Kings of Aragon, Castile, and France; while on his grandmother's side he could trace descent from England's Saxon Kings. For godfather he had Pope Honorius III, the Pontiff who confirmed the Order of Preachers, of which the child was destined to be the brightest luminary. The Aquinos were a military race, so Landulf gave to his third son a name already famous in arms, Thomas, in memory of his own father, who had been Captain-General of the Imperial forces; little did he dream then that the boy would be a soldier of Christ, wielding the sword of Truth, and an undying leader of intellectual hosts.

The future holiness of the unborn babe was disclosed to his mother by a holy hermit of the neighbourhood, known simply as Buono, or God's good man. Clad in a rough garment, and with hair unkempt, he presented himself at Rocca Secca, and pointing to a picture of the holy patriarch St. Dominic, who was not yet canonized, he thus addressed the Countess: "Lady, be glad, for thou art about to have a son whom thou shalt call Thomas. Thou and thy husband will think of making him a monk in the Abbey of Monte Cassino, where St. Benedict's body reposes, in the hopes that your son will attain to its honours and wealth. But God has disposed otherwise, because he will become a friar of the Order of Preachers, and so great will be his learning and sanctity that

his equal will not be found through the whole world." Theodora listened with awe to the presage, then, falling upon her knees, exclaimed: "I am all unworthy of bearing such a son, but, God's will be done according to His good pleasure".

In due time the child was baptized under the name of Thomas, which signifies *Abyss*, while the Bishop of Aquino stood as proxy for the Sovereign Pontiff. In God's deep counsels a name imposed often stands prophetic of destiny: so was it in this instance, for in after days "the abyss put forth its voice" (Habacuc III. 10). From the hour of the prophetic telling, Thomas was the fruit of her soul by prayer as of a mother's womb by nature. A special providence watched over him during infancy. One night in June, 1228, a lightning stroke smote the tower in which the child of grace lay sleeping beside his nurse: in agony of mind the alarmed mother ran to the spot, to find him unharmed, while her little daughter lay dead and charred, and the horses in the stables beneath were killed. This occurrence left in him a life-long nervousness and dread of storms, which he could never allay. In consequence of this, in later years in a subterranean cave at Anagni, he traced upon the walls in capital letters this distich in fashion of a cross:—

Crux. Mihi. Certa. Salus.
Crux. Est. Quam. Semper. Adoro.
Crux. Domini. Mecum.
Crux. Mihi. Refugium.

The Cross is my sure safety.
It is the Cross that I ever adore.
The Lord's Cross is with me.
The Cross is my refuge.[1]

Thomas was a gentle child, with deep lustrous eyes and thoughtful expression of countenance, in whom piety appeared as a Divine gift of nature, an inborn sense of soul. His earliest turnings of mind and heart were to God, so that even in the dawn of his day he was spoken of as a child of grace. Free from the wonted petulance of childhood, he showed little of its giddiness, still he was always cheerful and of modest demeanour. He loved to gaze with eyes of wonder on the illuminated pages of missals or scripts which he was incapable of understanding, while the stillness of the chapel with its solitary light exercised a fascination on his tender mind. Gentle and fleeting as a Spring shower are the tears of childhood. If at any time they fell from his sunny face, the sight of a book or manuscript would always comfort him: it was his toy, his plaything, and to turn the pages ever and again was his little world of joy; clearly the child was father of the man. There is something startling, even eerie, in a child's piety, in its innocence, unconscious of guile, in its human faith of trust, its first turnings upwards: like the turning of the flower to the sun is a child's soul stirred and drawn heavenwards. When the Psalmist broke

[1] An Indulgence of 300 days is attached to its recital.

out in rhapsody: "Thy magnificence, O Lord, is elevated above the heavens," he instantly turns to the thought of the child: "Out of the mouths of infants and of sucklings Thou hast perfected praise" (Ps. VIII. 2, 3). All this we have to realize in the childhood of St. Thomas, whose young virgin soul, like some clear pool, reflected the Creator's image. As the first years drew on, he, like another Holy Child in Nazareth, grew in spiritual beauty before God and men. His angelic comeliness and sweetness of disposition increased, so that he charmed irresistibly all with whom he came in contact.

The first parting with home came in the autumn of 1231, when he was but six and a half years old. Six miles away to the south stands the venerable Abbey of Monte Cassino on a high plateau, and visible from Aquino and Rocca Secca. This ancient home of learning and piety was the school in which Count Landulf placed his boy, not in the cloister, but in the school for youths of gentle birth, since the old time custom of placing children in the cloister was extinct by papal mandate quite a century before. The monks of St. Benedict were deeply beholden to the Aquinos, who had defended their sanctuary against Roger, King of Sicily: at this very time the Lord Abbot, the fiftieth in line, was the young scholar's uncle, Landulf Sennebald. There the boy spent five years under the tutelage of those God-fearing men, but attended by his family tutor or governor, while the rare gifts of mind and soul expanded. It was

not an unbroken stay in the abbey, for when the holidays came round, he rode to Loreto or Belcastro to regain his family circle. During his stay in the school he learnt the common elements of a child's education, how to speak and write correctly his native Italian tongue, also the rudiments of Latin and French: to this would naturally be added the religious catechism suited to his tender years, and the school discipline of obedience. The memory of his residence there was long treasured up, and rehearsed in after days by the monks, who loved to speak of the precocious mind which would muse on Divine problems, and put such questions as these: "What is God? How can we know God? What is Truth?" Anything savouring of levity or carelessness was never seen in him: however amiable he was towards his young companions or ready to pay them a service, he was slow to join in their boyish chatter, slower still at joining in their games. His refining influence made itself felt among them, but the companionship he prized most was a book, and his favourite retreat the church. The atmosphere of the quiet cloistered precincts was a congenial one: it nurtured his observant powers, and formed the silent thinker, the prayerful spirit, who spoke so deeply in maturer years.

Mid-way between his eleventh and twelfth years came the violent transition which so often mars characters of promise. The shy boy, with those round ox-like eyes set deep and clear, must pass

from peace to tumult, from private to public schools and to streets often mad with revelry. What the school begins, the University completes, with its fuller range of sciences, its vaster auditory, its skilled professors : so, acting on the advice of Abbot Senebald, the boy passes the threshold of a Catholic University. The choice lay between two such seats of learning, far-away Bologna of long-standing eminence, and its younger rival, Naples, which was close to hand. A law of the Emperor Frederick II, its founder, forbade his subjects to study elsewhere than in Naples, so Count Landulf's choice was reduced to one of compliance. During this summer's holiday time, which was spent at Loreto, Thomas busied himself in visiting the needy and relieving their wants, especially since famine was pressing severely on the country. Not content with carrying constantly the common necessaries of life, he often brought to them the delicacies meant for his own use. Such generosity being reported in an unfavourable light to his father, the Count resolved on curbing his actions, if not his compassion. One morning as the boy was speeding forth on his errand of mercy, with a supply of white bread under his cloak, Landulf stayed his steps, and demanded to be shown what he was carrying away. Crimsoned with confusion, Thomas was about to explain, when the father roughly plucked the cloak aside, and an armful of fragrant roses fell at his feet. The father saw the hand of God in the act, for he had been stealthily watching the tender culprit, then he strode

hastily away in tears; long he pondered over the reports which had reached his willing ears, of the glowing halo seen at times round the mysterious boy's head.

It was in the autumn of 1236 that Thomas Aquinas entered Naples University. He had his own residence and retinue, but continued under the vigilant eye of the same governor as when at Monte Cassino, who now acted as his good angel in the city so aptly described as—"a very paradise of God, but inhabited by demons". Knowledge of evil is not of itself evil, else the angels would not be clean: so the boy's clear perception of worldliness and flaunted vice served only to foster his spirit of reserve, of communing with God, while, like Daniel in Babylon, he prayed to be kept clean. Making the Psalmist's speech his own, he made daily use of these brief prayers:—"*Prove me, Lord, and try me. Lord, let Thy face shine upon Thy servant, teach me Thy ways of holiness. Guide my steps according to Thy behest, that no iniquity may take hold of me.*" Lodged according to his rank, he often rode round the fair bay of Naples, past the glowing splendour or frequent fury of Vesuvius, images to him of heaven and of hell, to gaze on the sites of cities long buried, Pompeii, and Herculaneum, or else crossing the waters, to behold the wonders of the blue grottoes of Capri. Nowhere else is Nature garbed in richer array, but it cried to him only of God, while his soul found response in the exclamation of Augustine of Hippo: "If the

works of His hands be so lovely, O how much more beautiful must He be Who made them!" The words of the Creator's approval kept recurring in memory: "And He saw that they were good". What holds the natural man to earth, uplifts the spiritual man heavenwards; so in his ripening youth he was fired with the poetry of Nature, but as a Divine song.

During the seven years of his stay, as the boy grew into the man of uncommon stature in body and intellect, he studied to good purpose under men of eminence. He pursued the course of studies which was common to all Universities of the time. During four years he passed through the *Trivium*, under the distinguished Pietro Martini: this comprised grammar,[1] logic and rhetoric, which he completed when fourteen and a half years old. The higher studies of the *Quadrivium*, a three years' course, embracing music, mathematics, geometry, and astronomy, he pursued under a professor of note, Peter from Ireland. There can be no doubt of the fact that our saintly scholar graduated in both courses, which covered the whole range of the classics, logic, and physics. Both masters held him in high esteem, and constantly pointed him out as a pattern of industry. A singularly retentive memory and sense of logic enabled him to repeat the lesson more deeply and lucidly than the professors had given it, so that the scholars came

[1] The study of the poets, the historians, and the art of speaking and writing properly.

to regard him as a miracle of holiness and learning, an angel in the schools, though not yet "The Angel of the Schools". Such talent left him much leisure time, yet without idleness, for it was all given to assimilating knowledge by method and discipline.

Man's soul is simple in its nature, but very complex in its workings, especially when acting through the senses. The *Pars Superior* is the soul untrammelled in its purely spiritual workings of understanding or volition, regarding things which are beyond Nature's horizon. At its greatest altitude it rises up to the Divine. The *Pars Inferior* is the same spirit working through the senses. As Aristotle observes, and the Schoolmen agree, "there is nothing in the understanding except it first come under the senses": from this common rule one must exclude first principles, which all mankind instantly accepts because of their self-evidence. Education is nothing else than *the drawing out* of these parts with their latent powers, even as Nature's secret forces can be drawn forth by attraction: thus while the powers are sharpened, their store of accretions is termed knowledge. Now all this economy of the mind was grasped by the youthful Aquinas, and brought to bear on his threefold plan of self-education. Endowed with genius of intellect, as the eagle soaring above the commoner birds of the air, he first carefully scanned, then boldly swept across the intellectual horizon.

His first field of education was Divine. God was

his centre of gravity, to which he ever inclined, his highest zone of speculative thought, his fountain-head of spirituality in mind and heart. Such education is productive of sanctity, because it is seeking and finding, feeding upon and assimilating Divine Truth, not as from afar, but by union of intimacy with Him Who is Truth. If the child queried—What is Truth? and What is God? the youth answered his own query: "God is Truth, and all truth is of God". Such pursuit of highest truth produces wisdom, of which, as of compassion, he could say: "It grew with me from infancy" (Job xxxi. 18). "Wisdom led the just man along righteous ways, showed him God's kingdom, and imparted to him the knowledge of holy things" (Wis. x. 10). Thomas was a theologian *in potency* as one wedded to Divine Wisdom.

His second domain of industry in learning was among men. In the writings left of the ancients, he found thought distributed among the poets, the orators, the philosophers: these he read studiously now, and stored them up in the cells of memory. Most of them he read but once in a lifetime, and that was at this very period: of course all Thomist students are quite aware of the great exception with regard to Aristotle's works, for these were constantly at his elbow. All is true subjectively in the writings of those men of old-time fame, that is, if judged from their standpoint, and according to the schools they represented: much therein is true also objectively, and elevating even from

our Christian coign of vantage. But the question with the solid thinker is—where precisely to fix his standpoint. In first principles all men are agreed, with few dissentients, such as sceptics, and even these postulate some one first principle: the parting of the ways comes where Revelation steps in, uplifting and guiding Reason. From Aristotle to St. Thomas, philosophy made no sensible progress, but rather the reverse: but when the saint Christianized the Stagyrite, and brought his writings into line with Revelation, then the thoughts of men reverted to the past, and grew vigorous in consequence. Such was the scholastic revival of the thirteenth century, devised by this vigorous young thinker in Naples.

His third field of self-culture was Nature, whose open page all men read, and so few understand. He was a careful observer of Nature's laws, of matter, and force, and forms, and causalities: but while turning to Nature he was no slavish empiricist, as will be seen later on. With him, mentality ever held the first place. Above all things he was consistent, because consistency comes of an evenly balanced mind: the Eclecticism of past and present teachers he would certainly have ascribed to the inconsistency of illogical minds, resulting in a perversion of order, and stultifying of principles. In Naples this youth had assimilated from his reading all that Cicero has comprised in his definition of Philosophy: "The knowledge of things Divine and human and of their disposing causes".

CHAPTER II.

VOCATION AND TRIALS.

HAVING seen the scholar in his morn of toil, let us now turn to the youth aspiring to the Religious state: bent on rising to spiritual perfection according to grace, he naturally sought out and embraced the state which is conducive to such perfection.

The germ of a vocation to the Religious life, and to the Dominican form of such life in particular, fell early upon his eager soul, where it germinated through nine years before blossoming into reality of fulfilment. When but nine and a half years old he witnessed a spectacle at Monte Cassino which entered deeply into his soul: it was the solemnity of St. Dominic's canonization Mass, granted on 13 July, and kept on 5 August, 1234, the exaltation of that Dominic who so recently had been the "Doctor of Truth and Preacher of Grace," the story of whose life was fresh on men's lips. There is a spiritual affinity in saintship, so the spirit of the child went out to the man of God who was soon to call him son. In the Dominican church at Naples, Thomas was often seen absorbed in prayer, while spreading rays of light shone from his head. The friars were well aware of it, so that, after witnessing the marvel for the third time, Fr. John of St. Julien said to him: "Our Lord has given you to our Order". Ripening intimacy begot resolve. When he was but fifteen and a half years

of age, on the completion of his *Trivium*, he declared to the Prior of San Domenico that for some time he had ardently desired to give himself to the Order. On bended knees he made his humble suit and protestation: "But I am not worthy, and is not my age an obstacle?" Fr. Thomas d'Agni di Lentino, the Prior, and Fr. John of St. Julien, a famous preacher, bade him foster the grace of a vocation, but advised him to wait for three more years. This he accordingly did. When eighteen and a half years of age, he was clothed in the holy habit as a Friar Preacher, in August, 1243, probably on St. Dominic's feast-day, which was then kept on the 5th. It was a momentous step, a memorable occasion, for the ceremony was carried out before a distinguished assembly. Not a word was spoken to parents or to others of his design: he had learnt his lesson from a saying of Tobias: "It is a good thing to hide the King's secret" (XII. 7). From that happy hour until death his conduct might be expressed in the language of St. Paul: "Forgetting the things that are behind, and stretching forth myself to those that are before, I pursue towards the mark, for the prize of the heavenly vocation of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. III. 13, 14).

Soon the tidings reached Rocca Secca that Thomas had entered the cloister of the Preaching Friars, which evoked a storm of indignation. His mother was especially angered, not because he had chosen to quit the world, but at the unpardon-

able affront of the scion of a princely house donning the garb of a mendicant friar. Complaints were addressed to the Pope and to the Archbishop of Naples, while loud were the menaces uttered against the Father-General and the Prior, and these were caught up by the common herd in the street: as for the monks of the two Benedictine communities in Naples and their brethren of Monte Cassino, they made no protest, advanced no plea, since it was no concern of theirs, nor did they move or speak at his profession two years later. Theodora d'Aquino was a woman of resolute spirit, now thoroughly roused: hermits may prophesy, that is their business, but the settlement of a son is a domestic affair, largely a woman's affair, if she can but have her way. But no sooner did she perceive that noise and fury would not prevail, than she set out for Naples with masked batteries of tears and entreaties, to induce him to return home. One thing she overlooked in her gage of battle, and that was that her son was also an Aquino, a man of like determined character, though of calmer mood. Directly Thomas heard of her setting out, he took the by-road to Rome, and entered the Convent of Santa Sabina, St. Dominic's former home on the Aventine. Thither the eager mother pursued him. Strong in his sense of fidelity to a Divine call, Thomas refused even to see her when she clamoured in the porch. "Whoever loves father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me" (Matt. x. 37). What his sentiments were then he

subsequently wrote in his "Summa Theologica" (II*a* II*oe* Quest. CIX, article 4), when treating of piety, or duty towards parents. The article is entitled—"Whether Duties towards Parents Are To Be Set Aside for the Sake of Religion". The answer is a distinct negative, but admitting of one saving exception, which he exposes in the following terms:—

"If reverence for parents withdraws us from God's worship, then we must not stand by duty to parents against God. Accordingly St. Jerome says in his Letter to Heliodorus, towards the opening: 'Set father aside, treading upon him, set mother aside, treading upon her, with dry eyes fly to the standard of the Cross: to be cruel in such a matter is the height of piety'. Consequently, in such an issue, the duties of filial piety must be set aside for the sake of the Divine worship of religion. But if by rendering due reverence to parents we are not withdrawn from God's worship, then it will be a part of piety, and so it will not be necessary to drop piety for the sake of religion."

While the Countess made Rome ring with her complaints and threats, the heroic novice hurried off northwards to Paris. Straightway Theodora vowed to capture and hold the runaway: a mounted courier was speedily dispatched to her elder sons, Landulf and Raynald, who then commanded the Emperor's forces in Tuscany, bidding them to seize him *vi et armis*. Thomas was resting by a spring with two friars, close to the little town of Acqua-

pendente, between Sienna and Lake Bolsena, when a troop of horse surprised him. His brothers reviled him for his undutiful behaviour, then bade him put off his habit and return home. Raynald laid violent hands upon him and tried to tear it from his shoulders, but to no purpose, so the brothers led him back to Rocca Secca. Since his resolution was not to be shaken, at their father's bidding the brothers led him off to the village of Monte San Giovanni, some two miles away, where they shut him as a close prisoner in the castle tower. There he was subjected to harsh treatment, stripped of his religious habit, reviled, and deprived of every comfort. Count Landulf visited his son from time to time to induce him, nay, force him, to forsake the Dominican life: he left a costly suit of garments, and a Benedictine habit, declaring he would be fully satisfied if Thomas would but don the one or the other. What he looked to was pride of place: his son should grace the Court, or rule as Lord Abbot of Monte Cassino.

Like Christ in the desert, the novice had to encounter three classes of temptation, and came forth victorious. The world tempted him, first by the softness of a mother's tears and entreaties: when these failed of their purpose, it tried the coaxings of his worldly minded sisters, who rehearsed the father's plea of fame at Court or in arms, or else in Church preferment. By simple and earnest discourse the novice won them over completely to God: Marietta, the elder sister, em-

braced the cloistered state, and died as Abbess of St. Mary's at Capua ; Theodora, afterwards Countess of Marisco, entered upon a life of singular holiness. From that hour both laboured to ameliorate his hardships.

A stronger temptation then assailed him through the baseness of his brothers. Lust of the flesh is death to spirituality : so they bribed a base woman to try her lures, and entangle him in the Circe web of sin. Seizing a burning faggot from the hearth, he drove her from the chamber, then, falling on his knees, he traced the sign of the Cross upon the wall with the flaming brand, and poured out his soul in thanks to God. Presently a gentle sleep stole upon him, like to Adam's sleep of innocence in Paradise. Then by his side he beheld two angels who girt him about with a lily-white girdle, saying the while : " We come to thee from God, to bestow upon thee the grace of perpetual virginity ". They girded him so tightly that he awoke with a loud cry of pain. He wore the sacred girdle all through life, and only revealed the secret at its close to Fr. Reginald of Piperno, who was his bosom friend and confessor, assuring him that from that hour he was never again conscious of the slightest sensual motions. The prison cell in after years was turned into a chapel, which may yet be seen in a dilapidated condition. The angelic girdle was preserved with reverence in the convent of his Order at Vercelli, in Piedmont, down to the suppression of the religious houses during the wars of

Napoleon I : it is now kept at Chieri, near Turin, the first house restored.

This precious relic was solemnly transferred in 1894 to a new reliquary, which is a magnificent work of art, made of bronze over-gilt. Standing quite six feet six inches in height, of hexagonal shape and Gothic design, it has six medallions on the base, displaying scenes in his life, wrought in finest Roman enamel. Around the knop in the centre of the stem are the same number of statuettes of Dominican saints, wrought in silver, and under canopies. The reliquary superimposed is also a hexagon, with a double set of silver statuettes, six to each row, allegorical figures below, and angels with musical instruments above, after the designs of Fra Angelico. Enclosed within a crystal case, a much larger angel, with outspread arms, displays the sacred girdle, now grown brown with age, which is held in place by rings and threads of silver. A figure of the Angelic Doctor, all resplendent in gold, stands on high, beneath a pierced tower-shaped canopy, which is finally topped by a gold cross.

Meanwhile his superiors and brethren had not forgotten him as the months grew into a year, and beyond. Father John of St. Julien contrived to visit him several times, and supplied him with another religious habit of the Order, which so offended Count Landulf that he held him in durance for some days. Books too were gradually supplied to relieve the tedium of imprisonment :

this was done through his sister's good offices: the works supplied were carefully committed to memory; these were Aristotle's "Metaphysics," the "Sentences" of Peter Lombard, and portions of the Sacred Scriptures. The Friars Preachers lodged complaints with Pope Innocent IV and the Emperor Frederick against such unjust privation of liberty, each of whom sent stringent orders for his release. The pride of the soldier sons was roused at such commands, nor would they comply, but consented to connive at his escape. Like a second Paul, he was let down from a window in a basket into the arms of brethren who conducted him to Naples, "their hearts leaping with joy at having recovered their Joseph, who was endowed with the spirit of understanding like Jacob's son" (Tocco). He had endured a close and painful imprisonment for about eighteen months, so now, after a short probation in the cloister, he was admitted to solemn vows in January, 1245,[1] making profession into the hands of the same Prior who had clothed him in the habit of St. Dominic.[2]

Having conquered world and flesh, the holy youth had yet to vanquish the devil. Even earnest Christians are at times unconsciously obsessed by the lying spirit: deceived themselves, they labour to mislead others. So was it now, when "the father of lies" spoke by many mouths to "the

[1] Acta S.S. Mar. VII. 710; Tocco II. 12.

[2] The Prior, Thomas d'Agni di Lentino, subsequently became Patriarch of Jerusalem.

Photo. Alinari

"ST. THOMAS AS JUSTICE," ROOF-MEDALLION FROM ORCAGNA'S "TRIUMPH OF ST. THOMAS," IN THE STROZZI CHAPEL, CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA NOVELLA, FLORENCE.

Father of the faithful". Appeals and complaints were addressed to Pope Innocent, calling upon him to annul the profession just made. Some urged the impropriety of a prince turning mendicant, since he was a possible heir to the titles and estates: in fact he did survive his elder brothers. Others again alleged defect of liberty in the novice; while not a few of his kinsmen pleaded nullity from the ignorance of a youth who did not know the world he had forsaken, nor realize the sacrifice he had made. At the word of obedience, Thomas presented himself before the Holy Father in Rome, and vanquished Satan by outspoken truthfulness. The Pontiff examined carefully the novice's motives in choosing the life and in making profession, listened tenderly to the story of his vocation, and ratified all that he had done.[1]

[1] The idle story of his having been a Benedictine monk for over twelve years, first came up in the early eighteenth century, and has again been served up in our own days. Such was the contention of an anonymous brochure issued in 1724, professing to be printed in Lyons, but in fact printed in Venice: "De monachatu Benedictino Divi Thomæ Aquinatis". In it his birth is antedated by five years, to 16 April, 1220. It was promptly refuted by another publication entitled, "De Fabula monachatus Benedictini Divi Thomæ Aquinatis," issued in the same year at Venice. The only foundation for the fable was the testimony of Bartholomew of Capua, Protonotary and Chancellor of Sicily, in his deposition for the saint's canonization. His actual words are these: "His father presented the said friar Thomas to the monastery when quite a child, with the idea of his being one day raised to

Baring his very soul to Pope Innocent, he pleaded his cause with candour: while blaming no one, he declared his whole ambition was absorbed in a vocation to renounce all worldly advantages, so as to serve God and the cause of Truth by becoming a Friar Preacher. On this point he was unbending: so the Holy Father dismissed him with a blessing, and forbade any further attempts to be made to hinder him from following his manifest vocation.

After the threefold storm came a lull, a great calm. Out of the fullness of the heart the tongue grows eloquent: so now from overflowing piety he composed and ever after used this prayer:—

"Lord Jesus Christ, I pray that the fiery and honey-sweet power of Thy love may detach my soul from everything under heaven, so that I may die from love of Thy love, Who, out of love for mine, did'st die upon the tree of the Cross. Amen."

Thus, in the opening days of a gracious life, "he shone as the morning star in the midst of a cloud" (Ecclus. L. 6).

the government of the Abbey". When the Pope actually offered him the rank in mature years, even retaining his Dominican habit, St. Thomas would not hear of it.

PART II: NOON.

CHAPTER III.

HIS STUDIES AT COLOGNE AND PARIS.

The Master-General at this time was the Venerable John of Wildeshausen, formerly a missionary, and Bishop of Bosnia. Knowing well the worth and rare abilities of his subject, he resolved on giving him the best opportunities for developing his singular powers. The first step was to remove him far from the importunities and distractions of home. The school presided over by Albertus Magnus in Cologne being in his judgment the best suited for the purpose, the holy man set out from Rome with Br. Thomas, in October, 1245. But since business of the order required the Father-General's presence in Paris, they proceeded thither on foot, carrying nothing but a satchel and a breviary. In those days of faith it was a familiar scene to pass Churchmen of every degree upon the road; now bishops and abbots, mounted on well-caparisoned horses, and with a retinue of retainers; now the beneficed clergy riding in company, or with the stout burgesses, and a few men at arms for pro-

tection; or else it might be the more modest company of monks and friars and pilgrims, all afoot, and even the veiled minchins on palfreys. The travellers sped on commonly like two streams in their channels, going to or else returning from the threshold of the holy Apostles in Rome. But apart from this throng, it was of daily occurrence to see the hooded friars of various orders wending their way in couples or trios apart, and ever on foot, across the Alps to the greater schools on either side of the mountains, or journeying afar to attend General Chapters. There was a constant movement going on over those rough roads which were the arteries of European life, and across many a river and mountain.

Fr. John of Wildeshausen and Br. Thomas Aquinas, stooping age and vigorous youth, thought lightly of a journey afoot extending over 1500 miles. They set out each morning and walked a good space, now conversing familiarly, now reciting the breviary or in silent meditation, until by some running brook they opened their wallets for the mid-day repast. At sunset they sought for lodging in some religious establishment, or hospice, or else under the roof of God-fearing folk. Such had been St. Dominic's manner of travelling, and that of all the mediaeval saints, and now from this first experience St. Thomas grew familiar with it. It was a weary task at the outset, until the traveller came to be inured; but the free play of the muscles supplies a vigour and freshness unknown

to them who lag at home. But at the same time men's sense of Christian hospitality was more universal than in our day, and no one wearing the livery of Christ was ever turned from a Christian door: true enough, beds were often lacking, but then there was the fragrant hay in the cottar's loft, and the lowing of the cattle at night was a reminder of Bethlehem. In this fashion the aged bishop and his son in Christ plodded on across the rainy plains of Lombardy in sad November, crossed the biting Alpine passes in December, and, following the Valley of the Rhone, pressed northwards towards Paris. Their brief halt in the French capital was spent in the great Priory of St. Jacques, amidst their brethren. Once more they set out with wallet and staff, through Brabant, past Louvain and Aachen, until they reached the ancient city of Cologne on the Rhine, in January 1246. The Dominican Schools of Philosophy and Theology were founded therein by the German friars in the year 1222. This ancient foundation, dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene, consisting of an extensive priory and church, stood in the Stolkgasse, hard by the cathedral. It had risen into public as well as domestic eminence owing to the teaching of that prodigiously learned man, Albertus Magnus. He belonged to the noble family of Bollstadt, from Lavingen, in Bavarian Swabia; during ten years he had studied at Padua, and won his first spurs as a keen dialectician, before taking the Dominican habit. Blessed Jordon of Saxony, the Master-

General at the time, completely captivated him by his masterful eloquence and holiness, received his vows by St. Dominic's tomb in Bologna, and left him there to complete the higher studies. Returning home to Germany, he acquired such a reputation for learning, notably in physical science, that his contemporaries styled him "*Albert the Great, the Universal Doctor*," and posterity has confirmed the verdict.[1] The Belgian Chronicle has inscribed his name in its Annals with this just encomium: "Great in Magic,[2] greater in Philosophy, greatest in Divinity". His published works in twenty-seven folio volumes reveal his vast breadth of research, as well as the depth of his acumen. Such was the man marked out by God's Providence to be the master of "*The Angel of the Schools*". Albert was in his fifty-second year, and Thomas just 20 years old, when first they met: little did either of them suppose that the younger would eclipse the elder, as the sunset in glory veils the star. All notions of Albert having ever been mentally slow, or styled "the dull Swabian novice," must be relegated to the pages of idle romance, for they are utterly void of foundation.

St. Thomas entered the schools of Albert, as a gem to be cut by a cunning hand, but the fluent genius in the rostrum utterly failed to comprehend him: the truer genius seated below was pro-

[1] His marble effigy graces the Prince Consort Memorial in London.

[2] That is, in Physics.

nounced to be a dullard. Among his fellow students Thomas passed for a slow wit, however much impressed they might be by his retirement and application. Even Albert shared in the verdict, until he received a rude awakening. Yet this was the youth of whom Rodolph in his "Life of Albertus Magnus" gives the just estimate in impassioned phrase: "Thomas hastened to Cologne with the ardour of a thirsty stag which runs to a fountain of pure water, there to receive from Albert's hand the life-giving cup of wisdom, and to slake therein the thirst which consumed him". Among those novice-students, Germans, Italians, French, were youths who afterwards shone in the Church and in Universities as saints, cardinals, prelates, and professors: such were Ambrose of Sienna, Ulrich of Engelbrecht, Thomas de Cantimpré, and many more. Modesty in expressing an opinion, the attitude of rapt attention as a listener, in the tall Neapolitan brother, above all, his profound humility in shunning display, all led up to the common verdict that Thomas was stupid, so a name was speedily found for him: it was "*the dumb Sicilian ox*". With them learning meant *wrangling*: with St. Thomas it was all *thought*. When asked later on in life why he had been silent so long at Cologne, he replied: "It was because I had not yet learned to speak before such a mind as Albert".

A novice more charitable than his fellows offered one day to help him in preparing the morrow's

lesson. The saint gratefully accepted the assistance; but when the would-be instructor got hopelessly involved in the argument Thomas came to his assistance and unravelled the tangle quite easily. Some time after this Albert invited the scholars to give him their views upon an obscure passage in a book of itself obscure, the "Book of the Divine Names," a fifth century work, but then uncritically ascribed to Denis the Areopagite. The outwitted brother, who had floundered so helplessly in assisting Br. Thomas, now asked him to write down his solution; this he did in candid simplicity. The paper was delivered into Albert's hands, who at once recognized the impress of a master mind, so straightway he set him up at the lector's desk to defend certain knotty questions which were subjects of discussion at the time. Thomas explained the matter with such surprising clearness and force that his auditory was amazed. Nor did he handle with less skill the intricate objections raised by the Bachelor, as he cut his way through with keen distinctions. The objector then interposed sharply: "You seem to forget that you are not a master, to decide, but a disciple to learn how to answer arguments raised". Then came the simple rejoinder: "I don't see any other way of answering the difficulty". Albert now interposed: "Very well then, continue according to your method, but remember that I have my objections to make"; whereupon he plied him with retorts, axioms transgressed, and sub-divisions of sub-distinctions, but

Thomas never faltered for an instant. To each thrust of argument advanced he had a ready parry of a distinction, or of argument retorted in its utmost conclusions, for he was a swordsman of the tongue, a very giant of dialectics. Albert could restrain himself no longer. "You call him '*a dumb ox*,' but I declare before you that he will yet bellow so loud in doctrine that his voice will resound through the whole world." He procured a cell for him next to his own, allowed him to avail himself of the results of his own laborious researches, and made him the companion of his walks.

The lesson was not lost upon the students, who, while admiring his genius, still continued to twit him with his simplicity. One day a novice observing him as he stood by the open window, called out: "Look, look, there is an ox flying over the convent". Thomas leant forth and gazed up, to be greeted with laughter of derision; but the tormentor quailed before the rejoinder: "I was not so simple as to believe that an ox could fly, but I never imagined that a religious man could stoop to falsehood". Many years afterwards a similar jest drew forth the same rebuke, when asked—"Could you have believed that a fish could climb a tree?" St. Thomas was always extremely simple, but it was the simplicity of the Gospel. At this early period he launched forth on his first work, which was a commentary on the Ethics of Aristotle.

Six months were the limit of his first stay in Cologne. The General Chapter of the order met

there at Pentecost decided to send Albert and Thomas to Paris, the master to occupy a chair in the University, which was then the foremost in the world, the disciple to continue his studies under the best possible advantages. The progress of this scholar cannot be set forth better than in his own axiom inculcated in the "Summa Theologica": "*Whatever is received by any subject is grasped according to the subject's capacity*". And his was a genius which already bid fair to overtop Albertus Magnus.

During the month of August three Friars Preachers might be seen journeying afoot from the Rhine to the Seine: they were the Father-General, the master, the disciple: the Venerable John, Blessed Albert, St. Thomas. Once arrived in Paris, master and disciple resumed their places in the Dominican schools, which were affiliated to the University. Albert's reputation having preceded him, he drew a vast concourse of students to his lectures; in time the assembly grew to be so vast that no hall could accommodate the auditory, until by compulsion he had to lecture in the open square. Master Albert was outpaced in holiness and in learning by his meteor disciple; but the Church has beatified him, the world has acclaimed him as the "*Universal Doctor*," who knew all that was to be known. Daily on his knees he recited the entire Psalter. His eminent piety has been attested to by many, but let one witness suffice: it is the testimony of his disciple, Cardinal Thomas of Can-

timpré: "After this ought it to astonish us that Albert should be endowed with superhuman knowledge, and that his word should enflame the heart more than that of other masters? We know now from what source those transports of love proceeded, which we see so frequently break out in his numerous writings." All the world owes him homage, because he trained the soul as well as the mind of St. Thomas.

Whether the master commented, or examined in the cloister school or elsewhere, Thomas was always present, forming himself on the great model. At this time he was engrossed in studying Aristotle's Metaphysics, the "Sacra Pagina" or Holy Scriptures, and Patrology, for these entered into the normal course of every scholastic; in his hours of privacy in the cell he set himself to read and retain in memory the voluminous writings of St. Augustine, the most learned of the doctors. To Thomas the mind of Augustine was the mind of the Catholic Church; upon him he based his opinions; his authority was final. Posterity is indebted to St. Thomas for a benefit so little known and recognized; after assimilating St. Augustine's works, which usually extend to forty volumes in octavo, he recast them in the terse and accurate speech of the Schoolmen.

Patrology is sacred science in its least scientific presentment. The Holy Fathers had none of the conciseness in form, none of the preciseness in terminology, which characterizes the thirteenth century

Schoolmen; they wrote with a fullness of diction and laxity of expression which is often tedious and sometimes misleading. The great Augustine is a river whose fullness of waters gladdens the city of God. The Fathers are the "*Fontes*," the *Authorities*, while the Schoolmen are but the Exponents; the former define doctrine, the latter define form, whereas "The Angel of the Schools" does both. But it must not be overlooked that St. Thomas had the Church's experience of eight centuries from the age of St. Augustine, during which interval both thought and speech were recast. Here in Paris he was the reader, the thinker, the rememberer, but still the disciple. To write and talk was reserved for maturer days, when the coarse grain now passing through the mill of his mind would emerge as the refined flour, to make the bread of doctrine. What little he wrote was for his own purposes: his hour had not yet come.

Such studious occupations did not cause his spirit of piety to relax. How often does the study even of Divine things cause the wells to dry up! It is to the student's hurt when the true inner spirit gives way before the outer discipline of learning. With the Dominicans, the novice remains such until priesthood under the vigilant eye and candid tongue of a novice master: forward youth, over pert of speech, has to be kept under, and wilful youth tamed; indolent nature must be jogged, and all show of cleverness put down by timely, yea, and untimely, snubbings. St. Thomas had ex-

perience of it in the novitiate at Paris. One day as he was reading aloud at table, the voice of reproval rang out sharp, correcting him for a false quantity in latinity: now although the error was not the novice's but the corrector's, the reader instantly adopted the amended prosody. When afterwards twitted with his want of spirit, he replied: "It really matters little how a word is pronounced, but it is of the utmost importance to practise humility and obedience on every occasion".

While in Paris he met among our brethren, the Friars Minor, one to whom his soul leaped out in friendship: this was the future Seraphic Doctor St. Bonaventure, a student at the time. For a parallel friendship one must go back to the days of David. "And it came to pass . . . the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul" (1 Kings XVIII. 1). Although they had entered religion about the same time, Bonaventure was older than Thomas by about four years. Their intimacy in Paris extended over seven years, that is from 1246 to 1248, and again from 1252 to 1256. It is sometimes stated that St. Thomas sat with his friend as a student under Master Alexander de Hales: that brilliant man, however, was dead before Thomas's arrival.

After two years spent in the schools of St. Jacques, Brother Thomas was raised to the Subdiaconate, and his younger brother, Rayner of Aquino, gave himself to the order in Naples. The

General Chapter which met in Paris in this year confirmed the Ordinances made in the two previous chapters, and erected four new formal colleges for the higher studies in other University centres: Oxford for England, Bologna for Northern Italy, Cologne for Germany, and Montpellier for Provence. Master Albert was now designated Regent for Cologne, with Thomas for Bachelor; so once more they wended their way to the Rhine, while Brother Thomas carried in his sack Aristotle's writings and the Sentences of Peter Lombard. On the road they halted at Louvain in Brabant, passing some days in the priory and church of Notre Dame aux Dominicains, on the Dyle: a relic of this visit is still reverently treasured in the new foundation there, the restored "Studium Generale"; it is the upper portion of the "pupitre," or lectern, from which St. Thomas sang the epistle.

As Bachelor he had charge of all the students: it was his task to supervise their plan of study, correct their essays, object severely in the daily defensions, read with them *in camera*. As a professor he began some daily lectures on Philosophy and the Sacred Scriptures, which were not restricted to his fellow religious, but were addressed to a great concourse of clerics as well. It may not be out of place to give his letter of golden advice addressed to a student, premising that it is not admitted as genuine by some critics:—

"MY VERY DEAR (BROTHER).

"Since you have asked me how you ought to study in order to amass the treasures of knowledge, listen to the advice which I am going to give you.

"As a mere stripling, advance up the streams, and do not all at once plunge into the deep: such is my caution, and your lesson. I bid you to be chary of speech, slower still in frequenting places of talk: embrace purity of conscience, pray unceasingly, love to keep to your cell if you wish to be admitted into the mystic wine-cellar. Show yourself genial to all: pay no heed to other folk's affairs: be not over-familiar with any person, because over-much familiarity breeds contempt, and gives occasion to distraction from study.

"On no account mix yourself up with the sayings and the doings of persons in the outside world. Most of all, avoid all useless visits, but try rather to walk constantly in the footsteps of good and holy men. Never mind from whom the lesson drops, but commit to memory whatever useful advice may be uttered. Give an account to yourself of your every word and action: see that you understand what you hear, and never leave a doubt unsolved: lay up all you can in the storehouse of memory, as he does who wants to fill a vase. 'Seek not the things which are beyond thee'.

"Following these ways, you will your whole life long put forth and bear both branches and fruit in

the vineyard of the Lord of Sabaoth. If you take these words to heart, you will attain your desire."

This letter is unquestionably the reflex of his own rule of conduct. No one could be more affable, more courteous, yet at the same time it was a principle with him to shun all needless visits; the world might come to him, but he would not go out to it. As the time drew near for him to be raised to the sacred priesthood, he gave himself over to more protracted prayer and watchings. Several hours of the day, as well as part of the night, were spent in attitude of adoration before the altar, often sighing and weeping audibly as his soul melted with devotion; the heat of love within was manifest on the glowing countenance. At early morn the brethren frequently found him like the angel guarding the sepulchre. The Archbishop of Cologne raised him to the diaconate, and subsequently to the priesthood. The prelate who had the privilege of consecrating his holy hands was Conrad of Hochstaden, the princely and munificent Archbishop who rebuilt the choir of the old Romanesque Cathedral. The ordination took place in the year 1250. His attitude in celebrating the Divine mysteries upon the altar was one of majesty, and of rapt devotion. William de Tocco, his pupil and first biographer, describes what he was privileged to witness daily: "When he consecrated in mass, he was seized with such intensity of devotion as to be dissolved in tears, utterly absorbed in its mysteries, and nourished with its fruits".

This year of gladness for him was one of dire disaster for his family. His brothers left the service of the Emperor Frederick II in consequence of his hostility to the Pope, and took up arms in defence of the Holy See. The enraged monarch thereupon besieged Rocca Secca Castle, and all but demolished it, put Raynald of Aquino to death, while the elder brother, Landulf, who was now head of the family, fell fighting in the cause of the Church. The Countess Theodora, stricken with grief and years, was forced into voluntary exile with her dependents, and died soon after in sentiments of great piety. St. Thomas heard of the ruin of his home and family with his wonted calm, humbly accepting God's inscrutable and adorable will.

All knowledge is aptly distinguished into two classes, which form the divisions of the holy doctor's writings. The distinction is his own: "The knowledge of Divine things is termed Wisdom, whereas the knowledge of human things is called Science". His life henceforth may be generally classified into two periods, each of twelve years; as an expository writer he now started his *scientific* period, which was in 1262 commuted for the *sapiential.*

During this time at Cologne he composed his first Opuscula, or lesser works. These were first of all Aristotelian: first in order was the treatise "On Being and Essence," then another on "The Principles of Nature"; for his theological course he wrote a "Commentary on the Sacred Scriptures,"

also a "Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard". At the instance of Adelaide Duchess of Brabant he drew up and sent her a treatise "On the Government of the Jews," for it was a thorny question of the day, as to how the Jews ought to be treated by Christian rulers.

From the day of his ordination the scholar came forth as the preacher. In the churches of Cologne and Bonn St. Thomas poured out his thoughts in rich German speech to delighted auditories; he was no utterer of platitudes or profundities, but an orator who spoke to the heart and held men under the spell of his sonorous eloquence. The great German awakening to liberty, and letters, and national prosperity, dated from 1250; their feudalism ended then, and a religious-minded people thought and wrote for the first time no longer in Latinity but in their own vigorous tongue. St. Thomas caught the public ear by his well-reasoned doctrinal sermons, which were listened to by Jews and Christians alike. To quote from de Tocco once more: "He was heard by the people as if his discourse came from God". "A wholesome tongue is a tree of life," as we read in Proverbs xv. 4. We have grown so used to think of him as the theologian teaching and writing that we are apt to lose sight of the apostolic side of his life. Not less an apostle in zeal than St. Dominic, he never let an occasion of preaching go by; where hundreds heard him in the schools, thousands hung on his lips in the churches of Italy, France, and

Germany, for this versatile man could say with St. Paul: "I give thanks to my God, for that I speak in all your tongues" (1 Cor. xiv. 18).

CHAPTER IV.

HE GRADUATES AS DOCTOR.

GREAT was the satisfaction of the scholars in Paris, greater the joy of the brethren, when Thomas was recalled thither as licentiate in 1252, with a view to taking the doctorate. The holy friendship with Bonaventure was resumed, and deepened. One day he found his friend engaged in writing the life of St. Francis of Assisi: loath to disturb him in his devout task, he stole quietly away from the cell, saying to his companion, "Let us leave a saint to write about a saint".

It was now a period of conflict between the city and the University, owing to the slaying of a student, coupled with the wounding and arrest of three more, perpetrated by the city guard. Since satisfaction was not forthcoming, the doctors closed their schools: but the Dominican and Franciscan professors continued to lecture as usual, having no interest in the dispute. Such a proceeding gave offence, so the University authorities passed a new statute, that for the future no one should be admitted to the degree of Doctor in Theology unless he swore to observe all the statutes, especially the one just formulated. This simply meant that on every occasion of a dispute between themselves and

the city, all lectures must cease until the matter was settled. The Mendicant Orders stood out, and refused to be so restricted. Why should sober-minded men be reduced to silence by reason of the night escapades of these young bloods! The disagreement lasted for over three years, while the saintly friends kept their souls in peace, studying, praying, and lecturing, as if there were no such entities as doctors and proctors and city-bailiffs. But when Friar Thomas Aquinas was duly presented by the Prior and Regent to stand for his degree, he was curtly set aside and the petition refused. Feeling ran so high that he and Bonaventure were driven out of the schools with kicks and hisses: such was the secularism of the age. Pope Alexander IV sent a Brief ordering the University to admit him to the doctorate: the Senate steadily refused to obey the mandate. Matters stood at a deadlock, the outlook was becoming serious, as the students forsook Paris for Oxford, not in units but in shoals, while Thomas lectured to the shrunken auditory of his brethren only.

During this time, which was as peaceful to him as it was distracting to others, he composed and issued treatises "On Man," "On Eternity," "OnThought," "The Movement of the Heart," "Thirty-six Articles in Reply to a Professor of Venice," "Explanation of Two Decretals of Pope Innocent III," written for the Archdeacon of Trent. The following, which have been attributed to him, must however be considered as apocryphal: "Of Fate," "The Powers

or the Soul," "The Difference between God's Word and Man's Word," "The Essence and Dimensions of Matter".

There came a lull in the storm early in 1256, since the Pope wrote to the Chancellor on 4 May, congratulating him on permitting Friar Thomas Aquinas to teach once more in public; but the spirit of rancour was still abroad. As he was preaching in St. Jacques' Church on Palm Sunday, one of the University proctors, Guillot by name, marched in and stopped his discourse, after which he read aloud a letter from William de St. Amour and the other doctors, full of acrimony against the Mendicant Friars and the preacher in particular. Thomas kept silent throughout, then calmly resumed his sermon. This William de St. Amour, a name of ill-omened fame, had just completed a work against the Mendicant Orders, entitled, "The Perils of the Last Times". This was the gage of battle thrown down by the doctors of Paris University. The French episcopate spoke out against the infamous book, but coming as it did from such high authority, the students and people accepted its lying statements. At the instance of the King, St. Louis IX, the Pope summoned both parties to appear before him. The gage of battle thus recklessly thrown down was taken up by Thomas and Bonaventure, while a commission of doctors represented the University: it was question now, not of privilege, but of the very right of existence for religious men.

Thomas proceeded straight to Rome on the summons of the Master General, Humbert de Romans, who put the book into his hands to read and refute. Against it he wrote his famous treatise, entitled, "An Apology for the Religious Orders," basing it upon the opening words of Psalm LXXXII.: "O God, who shall be like unto Thee? Hold not Thy peace, neither be Thou still, O God. For lo, Thine enemies have made a noise: and they that hate Thee have lifted up their head." He pronounced a discourse before the General Chapter, in which he broke out as follows: "Have no fear, my brethren, for I have examined it, and find it to be captious, perfidious, and erroneous". The mendicant apologists were Albert and Thomas on behalf of the Friars Preachers, Bonaventure and another on behalf of the Friars Minor, besides other friars from both orders; all appeared before Pope Alexander IV in Anagni Cathedral, and read their confutations; as was to be expected, this silly and most murderous work in its intent was condemned on 5 October, 1256. The apologies read that day deserve the eternal gratitude of all the religious orders: Paris reeled again under the blow smitten by the hands of the Universal, the Seraphic, the Angelic doctors, who vindicated the rights of holy poverty.

During this stay in Italy, St. Thomas confuted another work of impiety and false mysticism, entitled "The Eternal Gospel". In November he returned with Master Albert by sea to Marseilles.

During the early part of the voyage the weather seemed promising: soon, however, a wild tempest arose, which created panic in every breast but their own. Like another Paul, the saint prayed, the lives of the travellers and mariners were granted to his prayers, and all reached the port in safety.

Eleven Papal Briefs were sent out before *the Angel of the Schools* was admitted to his degree in October, 1257, in his thirty-third year. When the time came his humility took alarm: vainly he pleaded his unworthiness of such a dignity, or that there were other brethren, his seniors, who were more deserving of the doctorate. It required the voice of a formal obedience to get him to acquiesce, and this made him sad of heart.

During the night preceding the academic Act he was on his knees reciting the sixty-eighth Psalm, seeking comfort from heaven. "Save me, O God," cried he, "for the waters are come in, even to my soul!" then sleep overcame him, and he had this vision: before him stood a religious of mature years, wearing the habit of the order, who accosted him in gentle tones: "Why are you beseeching God thus earnestly, and in tears?" Then Thomas answered him with all his natural sincerity: "It is on account of the burden of the doctorate, for which my knowledge is insufficient, likewise because I do not know which text to select as the burden of my discourse". Then the heavenly visitor continued: "Behold thou art heard. Take the burden of the doctorate upon

thee, since God is with thee: choose for thy subject this text, and all will go well with thee: '*Thou waterest the hills from Thy chambers above: the earth shall be filled with the fruits of Thy works*'" (Ps. CIII. 13). Then he awoke and returned thanks to God. Who else can the heavenly instructor have been but the Apostolic Patriarch St. Dominic himself?

Early in the morning of the eventful day Thomas awoke with swollen cheek, and scarce able to speak from pangs of toothache; so he hied him to the cell of his friend Father Reginald for counsel in his misery. Reginald stood dumb with amazement at the mishap. Did he suggest some old-time remedy? Very likely he did, but Thomas hit upon a speedier one. Falling on his knees he prayed mutely a while, when to the cell floor fell the cause of the trouble, the tooth with its biting fangs.

It was on 23 October, 1257, that St. Thomas pronounced his oration in the hall of the Archbishop's palace, based on the text revealed to him: "*Thou waterest the hills from Thy chambers above: the earth shall be filled with the fruits of Thy works*". His theme was "*The Majesty of Christ*," and he spoke as one inspired, before a hushed assembly. It was as a scene rehearsed from the Book of Job (XXIX.): "The young men saw me, and hid themselves: the elders rose up and stood. The rulers ceased to speak, and laid their finger on their mouth." He applied his text to our Lord, who is King over angels and men alike. Christ from His throne of

majesty waters the mountains, which are the heavenly spirits, the sublime intelligences, with the torrents of His glory and light. He fills the Earth, that is to say, the Church upon earth, with the fruits of His works, through the Sacraments, which are the channels whereby He communicates to men the fruits of His Passion. After the oration he was solemnly received with cap and ring as a Doctor of Paris. There is an old tradition to the effect that St. Bonaventure was promoted on the same day. Some critics deny the fact,[1] but what tradition is there which has not been gainsaid! On this occasion arose the only contention they ever had together. Each from humility wished the other to take precedence, until Thomas gave way as being the younger.

CHAPTER V.

HIS WRITINGS; FIRST PERIOD: HIS SYSTEM AND METHOD OF STUDY.

"*Post honores, labores.*"—"*To honours succeed labours*".

LIKE some well-laden tree, Thomas, moved by the Spirit of Truth from on high, dropped the ripe fruits of learning. St. Raymund of Pennafort, known in history as "*The Master of the Decretals*," after resigning the rank of Master General of the Order of Preachers, retired to Spain, where he exercised his zeal in the conversion of the Jews and Moors.

[1] "Acta S.S.," Tom. xxx. p. 809.

What he needed most was a philosophic exposition of Christian belief, to combat Arabian thought. Aware of the newly risen star, he besought Father Thomas in Paris to undertake the task. Writing is preaching, when the pen is dipped in grace, and is ever more enduring. So the holy Doctor responded to the appeal by commencing his first monumental work, the "Summa Contra Gentiles," or, "The Sum of the Truth of Catholic Faith against the Gentiles".[1] Set forth in four books, it contains a complete demonstration of Christian Truth against false philosophies, demonstrating absolutely that the dogmas of Christianity can never be opposed to right reason. Its success was immense, and soon it was rendered out of Latin into Greek, Syriac, and Hebrew, in order to be more accessible to those against whose errors it was composed. In European schools from 1261 it became a text-book of the philosophy of religion. Next followed the mixed writings known as the "Quodlibets," a collection in 160 Articles of questions proposed with their solutions: some of these questions were profound, others trivial, but all throw a side-light on the scholastic subtilties of his day. After this he put forth the *opusculum* of 104 articles upon "Truth," this he followed up by the "Compendium of Theology". The masterly collection known as the "Questiones Disputatæ" was not written in any precise year: it is a compilation

[1] The exact date of completion of the "Summa Contra Gentiles" appears to be 1261 (Ptol. Lucca, L, XXII, C. 23).

made in 400 articles, comprising his answers to discussions arising out of his lectures, and extending over twenty years. In his elaborated Commentary on the Book of Job, he draws out admirably the argument of God's Providence governing the world.

The real presence of Christ in the Sacrament of the Eucharist is a doctrine which cannot be denied without making shipwreck of the faith. By the term *real* is meant an objective, substantial, abiding presence: it proclaims the living Christ to be truly in the Sacrament, "*Secundum rei Veritatem*". This doctrine is the very touchstone of Catholic belief, the centre of Catholic devotion. But in the age of St. Thomas, while all professed this faith, there were conflicting opinions as to the *manner* of such presence. The Doctors of Paris were especially full of this question, and now, after many fruitless disputes, resolved to refer the matter to the Angelic Doctor, since with him, to seize upon a difficulty was to unravel it. For a time he withdrew to the solitude of his cell to give himself up to prayer, then, under the dictation of the Holy Spirit, he wrote a treatise, "Of Substance and Accidents in the Eucharist,"[1] which he afterwards so pithily expressed in the "Lauda Sion".

> Here beneath these signs are hidden
> Priceless things to sense forbidden;
> Signs, not things, are all we see.

[1] The extant tractate is declared apocryphal by Père Mandonnet, O.P. Des écrits authentiques de St. Thomas d'Aquin Fribourg, 1910, p. 97.

After finishing the work he retired to the church, where he placed it upon the altar, and thus addressed the crucifix: "Lord Jesus Christ, Who art really present and workest wonders in this Sacrament, I humbly beg of Thee, that if what I have written of Thee be true, Thou wilt say so: but if I have written aught which is not conformable to the faith, or contrary to this holy mystery, be pleased to hinder me from proceeding farther". Fr. Reginald of Piperno and others who had followed him saw our Blessed Lord appear, standing on the manuscript, and heard Him speak these words of approbation: "Thou hast written ably of the Sacrament of My Body, and hast accurately determined the difficulty proposed to thee, in so far as it can be understood by man on earth, and be defined by human wisdom". Then the spectators beheld the holy man uplifted miraculously from the ground, as if drawn heavenwards by the fervour of his devotion. From that day the University looked upon him not merely as a genius of thought, but as a man sent of God. According to the statutes the Master must retire on the expiry of one year, and Thomas complied; but so keen was the sense of loss, that after a few months he was invited to resume his course.

St. Louis IX, King of France, held his relative Thomas Aquinas in the highest esteem, and made him a member of his Privy Council for State Affairs. It was his wont to inform the holy Doctor the evening before of all important business to be discussed on the morrow, so that he might come prepared to

tender advice. One is not surprised to find these years synchronize with the monarch's greatest temporal glory, opening an epoch of lasting benefit to France. He excused himself as often as he could with propriety from sitting at the royal table, but whether at Council board or supper, he was as recollected as in his cell. While sitting at table one evening with the King and Queen and guests, he was observed to be quite lost in thought. Vainly the Prior plucked his sleeve to arouse him, when suddenly the goblets and platters jumped from a blow of his fist on the trencher, and the sonorous voice rang out: "The argument is clinched against the Manichees!" All the while his train of thought had been of the heresy of the new Manichees, the Vaudois, and Cathari. The Prior rebuked him for such unseemly conduct, but the gentle Louis only smiled, and bade one of his secretaries write down the argument hastily, lest it might lose its force and clearness. The King furthermore employed him and Fr. Vincent de Beauvais, author of "The Threefold Mirror," in arranging the royal library of rare manuscripts Often might the spectacle be seen of the saintly King sitting as a rapt listener, while the great Doctor, now a man of commanding stature and build, poured out his eloquence within the walls of Notre Dame, or of St. Jacques. A fairer sight it was to behold Thomas humbly serving at Mass in the conventual church, or making the rough ways plain to novices in logic.

In the General Chapter assembled at Valen-

ciennes during Pentecost of 1259, he sat on the Commission for Studies, together with Masters Albert, Vincent de Beauvais, Peter de Tarentaise,[1] Buonomo, and Florence, all of them Doctors of Paris. It was their task to draw up a *Norma Studiorum*, or fixed programme of higher studies, to be employed in all colleges of the order ; the Ordinances then prescribed may be found in the Chapter Acts.[2] From thence he returned to Paris for two more years, lecturing and writing as before. In the schools his deportment and spirit reminded the listeners of the mildness and modesty of Christ ; never ruffled, never heated in argument, utterly devoid of pretence or display, he kept to his childlike way of holy simplicity. St. John Chrysostom in his "Sixty-second Homily on St. Matthew's Gospel," makes this deep observation, and St. Thomas certainly lived up to it : "The full measure of philosophy is to be simple, with prudence : such is an angelic life". Once when he was examining a candidate for the Licentiate, the cleric hazarded a thesis savouring of unorthodoxy ; Thomas gently reproved the line of argument taken, and pointed out its fatal consequences, but with rare delicacy. When blamed for not at once confuting the error, he rejoined : "I did not wish to put him to shame before such a distinguished auditory, but to-morrow

[1] Afterwards Pope Innocent V.

[2] "Reichart Acta Capitulorum Generalium," 1898, I. 99 ; cf. Denifle "Chartularium," Paris, 1889, I. β. 385, etc., n. 335.

I will convince him of his mistake". Next day came the final defension in the Archbishop's palace, when the same opinion was advanced with emboldened insolence. Then the holy Doctor calmly objected by accepting the thesis, but with pitiless logic forced the candidate to draw out his argument to its ultimate conclusions, which he had to admit were heretical and untenable. The defendant saw his error, withdrew the thesis, and apologized for the offensive manner assumed. The saint then administered a correction quite after his own fashion: "Ah, now you speak sound doctrine, as a true teacher should".

How did St. Thomas study? What was his method in writing? We gather it from the lips of his inseparable secretary and confessor and confidant, Fr. Reginald of Piperno. Before studying or lecturing he prayed much, distrusting his great natural gifts: when writing or dictating he would frequently rise and stand a while before the crucifix: at times he would withdraw to the altar where the adorable Sacrament reposed, and, leaning upon the altar table, or with head pressed against the Tabernacle door, collect his thoughts as he sought for light. During the composition of his Apology for the Faith, the "Summa Contra Gentiles," he was often seen in rapture. The Vatican Library contains among its other treasures a genuine autograph copy, on whose margins he occasionally wrote the words "*Ave Maria*".

Genius is twofold: it may be the dower of rare

mental parts, but more commonly it is the faculty of taking pains over work, the art of constructiveness: and St. Thomas shone in both. He took the greatest pains in forecasting his scheme, dividing and subdividing, after which he built up each portion in a separate article. There is an old adage in the schools:—

> Sanctus Doctor est doctrina simul et disciplina.
> (The Holy Doctor is both doctrine and discipline.)

From him the scholar can learn science and method. "He did all things well," as was said of our Lord. Employing both methods, analytic and synthetic, his aim was to construct each work on the basis of a vast synthesis. Of course this does not hold good of his Commentaries, where the purpose is all critical and expository. Nor does it apply to the "Catena Aurea," which is simply the stringing together of quotations from the Fathers: but even here one marvels at the acumen shown in the fitness of the passages culled from each, like a handful from a meadow.

The beauty of his writings lies in four cardinal points: Sublimity of thought, Subtilty of argument, Simplicity of style, Unction of spirit. Above all things he is logical in sequel. No one can presume to abridge him without losing the charm of his rare diction: wilfully to excise an argument, especially one which he calls "a first and more obvious one," such as the proof of God's existence drawn from motion, is the freedom of a pigmy towards a giant. The best model for the Christian apologist

to follow is his "Sum of the Truth of Catholic Faith against the Gentiles". His attitude towards the princes of the ancients, Plato and Aristotle,[1] is always one of reverence: towards the leaders of the Arabian school he is more hostile, since their influence threatened to undermine Christian thought: hence all his destructive weapons were brought to bear upon Avicenna (1037), Avicebron (1070), and Averroës (1198). His philosophy is Aristotelian throughout, but refined and purified by the light of revelation: with all the elevation of Plato, he does not disdain at times to use the Socratic method. A master of analysis, he furnishes us with many an example of clear thought. Take for instance his treatise on the Incarnation of our Blessed Lord, which he disposes of in fifty-nine questions: it is all resumed under four headings: *Ingressus*, His birth; *Progressus*, His mission; *Regressus*, His passion and death; *Exaltatio*, His ascension and headship.

No one need ever hope to understand St. Thomas who is not well grounded in Scholastic Philosophy: mere knowledge of latinity will not suffice. The student must attend to the holy Doctor's method of constructiveness, as exhibited in every article. He first submits his proposition: as for instance—"Whether Grace be a quality of the soul". Then he opens out with arguments to the contrary, varying from two to twenty, but commonly three in

[1] For question of the Church's supposed condemnation of Aristotle's Philosophy see "Siger de Brabant," by Pierre Mandonnet, O.P., Louvain, 1911.

number: these objections are drawn either from reason or authority, and such authority is either of Sacred Scripture, the Fathers, or the Philosophers. After apparently demolishing the proposition, he opens out his own line of argument by a "*Sed Contra*", or, "*But on the contrary*". In the body of the article he constructs the proof by solid arguments well reasoned out: frequently he adopts the historic method, narrating the opinions of past schools of thought, and demolishing each as he proceeds: finally he lays down the conclusion as established by irrefragable argument. All this is constructive method: now he passes to the destructive. Each objection proposed at the outset is weighed, distinguished, dismissed. The Scholastic rule of debate is this: "Never *admit*, seldom *deny*, always *distinguish*". All are not Thomists who read St. Thomas: Thomism is consistency with the principles and conclusions of the Master.

Great was the consternation and grief of Paris when the newly elected Pontiff, Urban IV, summoned St. Thomas to Rome. For four years now, from 1261 to 1265, he was a stranger to the public schools: Universities vainly petitioned for his services, but the Pope would have him close by his side. Although never made Master of the Sacred Palace, he was set over the school of select scholars, and resided with them in the Lateran Palace. Urban IV was a promoter of learning, and insisted on the staff and students following him in all his journeys and residences through Italy: thus it came

about that during five years Thomas held his "prelections," as they were termed, in Rome, Viterbo, Fondi, Orvieto, Anagni, Perugia, and Bologna. He was now a member of the papal household, a Consultor of the Holy Father, a teacher of the coming princes and bishops of the Church: at the same time he gave himself to preaching in these towns, to the great profit of souls. The uppermost thought in Urban's mind was the reunion of East with West, since the Eastern Church was unfortunately severed by heresy and schism. The Greek Church had stood aloof for ages from the centre of unity, the Chair of Peter, in a state of stagnation as to learning and sanctity. Christ's prayer for unity wrung the Pontiff's soul; so he opened his mind to the Angelic Doctor. The zeal of the one and the learning of the other ought surely to accomplish our Lord's desire: "*Grant, Father, that they may be one, even as Thou and I are one*" (St. John, XVII. 22). According to St. Thomas, schism is a most grievous crime, as destroying the Church's Unity, and setting up many folds and shepherds. Figuratively speaking, the Lord's seamless garment is rent: with such a conviction in mind, this loyal son of the Church set himself to repair it with the silver threads of argument and the golden of charity. At the bidding of Urban IV he composed a work entitled "Against the Errors of the Greeks". The Pope sent the book to Michael Paleologus, the eighth Emperor of Constantinople: soon it was turned into the Greek tongue, and copies multiplied, which

found their way into many hands. He followed it up with another work undertaken at the request of the Precentor of Antioch: "Against the Errors of the Greeks, Armenians, and Saracens". In this treatise he draws out in masterly fashion the Generation of the Eternal Word, the Procession of the Holy Ghost, the motive of the Incarnation, how the faithful receive the Body of Christ, Purgatory for expiation, the Beatific Vision in heaven, and lastly, how Predestination imposes no necessity on man's free-will. Our saint did not live to see the realization of his hopes, but he sowed the good seed which resulted in the harvest garnered in at the General Council of Florence, when the decree of union was pronounced.

Quite a year went by from St. Thomas's coming to Rome before the Pope removed his Court to Viterbo; during this interval he interpreted Aristotle to the students in the Lateran Palace. It was in Viterbo that he completed his second Commentary on the Sacred Scriptures: its method is quite different from the first: in the latter he bases his views upon Tradition, whereas in the former he relied upon the revealed letter itself. When these are employed side by side, they form a component harmony of the written word. The one aim of his life was to pursue and to impart knowledge. Daniel d'Augusta put the question to him one day, as to what he considered to be the greatest gift he had ever received, apart from sanctifying grace: with candour of soul he replied that it was the gift of understanding all that he had ever read. To inti-

mate friends he disclosed the secret of his marvellous wisdom, telling them that he learned more by prayer than from study. This is the prayer which he invariably made before lecturing or writing, or studying :—

"Creator, beyond human utterance, Who out of Thy wisdom's treasures didst establish three hierarchies of Angels, setting them in wonderful order to preside over the empyrean heaven, and Who hast most marvellously assorted the parts of the universe ; Thou Who art called the fountain-head of life and of wisdom, and the one over-ruling principle ; be pleased to shed the ray of Thy brightness over the gloom of my understanding, so as to dispel the double shadow of sin and ignorance in which I was born. Thou Who makest eloquent the tongues of babes, instruct my tongue, and shed the grace of Thy blessing upon my lips. Bestow on me keenness of wit to understand, the power of a retentive memory, method and ease of learning, subtilty for explaining, and the gift of ready speech. Teach me as I begin, direct me as I advance, complete my finished task for me, Thou Who art truly God and man, Who livest and reignest for ever and ever. Amen."

The fortieth General Chapter of the Order met in London in the year 1263, at Pentecost. We are told that 300 brethren took part in it, in the priory which stood in Holborn, which, on the testimony of Matthew Paris, was previously "the noble residence" of the Earl of Kent. King Henry III gave them a cordial welcome, assisted at the opening ceremony, and, as the *Garde-robe Accounts*

testify, gave a new habit to every friar present; this was by no means a superfluous gift, considering that all had come on foot, and many from remote quarters of Europe. The Chapter was presided over by the Venerable Humbert de Romans, fifth Master-General, who, after nine years of government, now laid down his office owing to infirmities. The resignation came as a surprise, and was accepted with regret, but since the Chapter was not an elective one, no more could be done than choose a Vicar-General for the ensuing year. Master Albertus Magnus was the one selected, and took up office. It was an eminent Chapter, if only from men of eminence who took part in it. St. Thomas was there, also Blessed Albertus Magnus, Peter de Tarentaise, better known now as Blessed Innocent V, Peter de Luca, the Roman Definitor, all the Provincials of the order with their companions, the Masters from Paris, David de Ayr, the Vicar-General of Scotland, and the Vicar from Ireland, some forty definitors, and the professors from Oxford. The fact of St. Thomas's presence is not attested by contemporary writers, but by later ones, who set forth many authentic details of his life corroborated from other sources. This need occasion no surprise, since the scope and purpose of the first biographers was to establish the sanctity and miracles of the Angelic Doctor, as set forth by the Commissions. He would have sailed from a French port in a schaloupe, and landed at Deal, from whence a short journey

would bring him to his brethren in Canterbury. From Canterbury to Rochester would form the second stage: then on the close of the third day he would be crossing Old London Bridge. There was an affinity between King Henry Plantagenet and Thomas of Aquino, although a remote one, since each sprang from the Princes of Normandy. Two main points occupy the attention of every Chapter: these are regular observance and study. During the great intellectual development of the thirteenth century, the question of the Schools was paramount; the nomination of Masters in Theology to the greater centres of teaching, the assigning of scholars who were to read in the various faculties, the enforcing or modifying of the *Norma Studiorum*, all these had to be discussed, and the results published. The aim of those first Dominicans, whose motto has ever been *Veritas*, or *Truth*, was not to keep abreast of the times, but to go beyond them, to lead, and progress beyond the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard in divinity, and glosses upon Aristotle. Most of all they sought to specialize. Thus at this very time three hundred of them were engaged under Cardinal Hugh de St. Cher in compiling the first Biblical Concordance, while St. Raymund of Pennafort was compiling his Five Books of Decretals, and others were establishing centres for the study of Oriental languages. Their halls in St. Edward's Schools at Oxford had been open now just forty years, and to these many of the disaffected scholars from Paris flocked. The condition of this

General House of Studies, enjoying the privileges of a University, would certainly form a subject for protracted discussion. On the conclusion of the Chapter, St. Thomas returned to Viterbo by way of Paris and Milan. In this latter city he prayed for some days before the tomb of his holy brother in religion, St. Peter of Verona, the Martyr, in whose honour a magnificent shrine had just been erected over his remains in the church of the order, San Eustorgio. At the request of the pious donors, he then composed the still extant epitaph :—

Præco, lucerna, pugil, Christi, populi, fideique, etc.

St. Thomas was Poet as well as Theologian : his "Summa Theologica" is one vast epic, while his poems are all of them devout and couched in sweet flowing numbers : and right well he sang of the object dearest to his soul, Christ veiled in the Eucharist. The office composed for the festival of Corpus Christi is the rhapsody of a poet inspired by faith and devotion ; that he wrote it is due to a command received by Pope Urban IV, whom he petitioned to establish a special feast to be known as Corpus Christi's. The thought was by no means his own, for the honour falls to three holy virgins of Belgium, the Blessed Julienne, Prioress of Mont Cornillon, Eve, the recluse by Liége, and Isabel of Huy. Stirred by a vision of the saints petitioning our Lord to establish such a festival in His Church, they consulted a devout Canon of Liége, John de Lausanne, who warmly approved of their design, and wrote the original Office of the Blessed

Sacrament. This good priest furthermore laid the scheme before Urban in the days when he was simply Archdeacon of St. Lambert in Liége, as well as before the Dominican Provincial, Hugh de St. Cher, besides consulting with Guy de Laon, Bishop of Cambrai, and three Dominican theologians, John, Giles, and Gerard. Now that the Archdeacon was seated on the throne of the Fisherman, he acceded to the prayers of these devout souls, and commissioned "his own Doctor," as he termed him, to compose a new office for the festival of Corpus Christi. Approaching this work in the spirit of reverent criticism, one is forced to pronounce it a marvel of poetic vein, tenderest thought and sublime doctrine. Dipping his pen as it were into his very heart, he wrote as one inspired; where all is beautiful, one is particularly struck with its doctrinal accuracy. Thus, in the Antiphon for the Second Vespers, he sets forth admirably the fourfold purpose of the Eucharist.

> O Sacred Banquet! wherein
> (1) The Christ is received,
> (2) The memory of His Passion recalled,
> (3) The Soul is filled with grace, and
> (4) A pledge of future glory given to us.

The language of theology is didactic, but in the sequence, the *Lauda Sion Salvatorem*, he sings even while he defines, like some bell-mouthed Seraph strayed from heaven. With the year 1264 closes his Noon-tide of life. The morning star's lustre has given place to the light of the full noon.

PART III: EVENING.

CHAPTER VI.

HIS WRITINGS: SECOND PERIOD.

WHILE the Angelic Doctor was reading his Office for Corpus Christi before Urban IV, the Pontiff's eyes were suffused with tears: never was guerdon better earned, so, retiring into his oratory, after a little while he came forth bearing the large silver dove containing the sacred species, and gave it as a memento. Then he charged St. Thomas to write a luminous commentary on the Four Gospels, compiled exclusively from the writings of the Fathers. Under the title of "Catena Aurea," or "Golden Chain," he composed the fullest commentary ever drawn from Patristic sources, culled impartially from Eastern and Western Fathers, and for the most part written from memory. St. Matthew's Gospel, finished in 1264, was dedicated to the Pope, who died soon after; the other three Gospels followed, but St. John's was dedicated to his fellow-religious, Cardinal d'Annibaldi. Directly Pope Clement IV assumed the tiara in February, 1265, he summoned Thomas to Rome. If love of truth made our saint

always to seek the quiet of retirement, the call of obedience found him ready for further work. He now put forth another argumentative treatise, begun long before in Paris, in which Arabian pantheism yielded before the power of the syllogism; its title is: "On the Unity of the Intellect, against the Averroists". Averroës, the cultured Arabian physician, while outwardly professing to be a Christian, was an atheist at heart. Christianity he called an impossible religion, Judaism one for children, Mohammedanism one fit for hogs. The basis of his errors was this, that all men have but the one intellect, and consequently but one soul: consequently, there is no personal morality. "Peter is saved: I am one intellect and soul with Peter; so I shall be saved." Presumably the deduction from unity of intellect with Judas was forgotten. From the appearance of St. Thomas's work, the philosophy of Averroës was consigned to the antiquities of the buried past.

Meanwhile the Father-General, Blessed John de Vercelli, and his brethren, were conscious of the loss to the Order in being so long deprived of the holy doctor's services: so now, by agreement with Pope Clement, he returned to the cloister-school of Santa Sabina on the Aventine. The General Chapter held at Montpellier in 1265 assigned him to Rome, to resume teaching. "We assign Friar Thomas of Aquino to Rome, for the remission of his sins, there to take over the direction of studies. Should any students be found wanting in application,

we empower him to send them back to their own convents." He now drew up the scheme of his most memorable work, the triumph of his life, the great "Summa Theologica," which he was not destined to complete even after nine years of labour. The very daring of the scheme, comprising the whole range of dogmatic and moral theology, fills the world with astonishment, while its intricacy of argument can be likened only to some gorgeous tapestry woven by the genius of thought. Let us hear his introductory prologue.

"Since the teacher of Catholic truth ought to instruct not merely the advanced, but it falls to him likewise to teach beginners, according to the saying of the Apostle in I Corinthians III. 1: '*As unto little ones in Christ, I gave you milk to drink, and not meat*'; the purpose of our intent in this work is to treat of the matters of the Christian religion in such a way as to adapt them to the instruction of beginners.

"Now we have observed that novices in such learning are very much hindered by the writings of some individuals; partly from the multiplying of useless questions, articles, and arguments; partly again because the themes to be learnt are not dealt with in their proper order, but just as the explanation of text-books called for, or as occasion for discussion arose; and, finally, in part because the constant repetition of the same matter begot weariness and confusion in the minds of the listeners.

"Endeavouring then to avoid these and similar

drawbacks, and confiding in the Divine assistance, we shall endeavour to traverse briefly and clearly all the matters of sacred doctrine, according as the matter in hand shall permit."

Drawing exhaustively upon theological founts, he brings in Philosophy simply as a handmaid, to confirm from Reason the teachings of Revelation. This *Sum of Theology* is the most perfect body of truth, the fullest exposition of theological lore ever given to the Church. When one calls to mind the frequent interruptions from daily lectures, frequent preaching and journeys afoot, the marvel is that it ever neared completion. The *First Part* treats of God and Creation. In rigid sequel the treatises deal with God's Existence, Unity, Attributes, and Trinity. Creation comprises God's creative action, the Hexameron or work of the six days, the Angels, and lastly Man. All this is set forth in 119 Questions, or divisions, subdivided into 584 articles, making one great folio. The *Second Part* is subdivided into two divisions known as the *First of the Second* and *Second of the Second*, yielding two more folios. The former deals with the End of man, which is the Vision of God; with Morality, Passions, Sin, Theological and Moral Virtues, Gifts of the Spirit, Law, and Grace. In comprises 114 Questions, containing 619 articles. Whereas this *Part* deals with the subject matter under common consideration, the *Second of the Second* goes over the same ground in detail, under particular consideration, ending with the states of bishops and religious. This occupies 189

Questions, with 916 articles. The *Third Part* treats of Redemption through Christ: the chief treatises are the Incarnation, the Life of Christ, thus forming a perfect Christology; the Sacraments as sources of grace applying the fruits of Redemption, then in detail—Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, and Penance. When mid-way through the treatise on Penance, the pen was laid down to be resumed no more. With his own hand he wrote ninety Questions, containing 539 articles. The rest of the Part is all his, but compiled by another hand: it is drawn from his Commentary on the Fourth Book of the Sentences: this supplement contains ninety-nine more Questions distributed into 442 articles; making the Third Part complete under 189 Questions, with 981 articles. This vast arsenal of Catholic Doctrine has altogether 497 Questions, subdivided into 2481 articles. The *First Part*, written in Rome, occupied him during two years; the *Second Part* was written in Bologna and Paris, the fruit of five years' toil; the *Third Part* was compiled in Naples. Small wonder then that the words of a Pope are inserted as an antiphon in his festival office:—

> **As a river of limpid knowledge**
> **He irrigates the entire Holy Church.**

Ten years had elapsed since the attack was made on the Mendicant Orders by William de Saint Amour, who was forced to retire apparently a broken man. Once more he returned to the fray with a

more plausible work, which the Pope handed over to the Master General for St. Thomas to confute. In 1268 appeared the Apology for the Religious Orders, entitled "Against those who would withdraw others from entering the Religious State". He wrote this Apology for a purpose, and he attained it: the purpose was to combat prejudice against youth seeking the state of perfection. Presently he added another treatise, "On the perfection of the Spiritual Life," to show wherein Christian perfection lies essentially, and by what means it may be attained.

All perfection consists essentially in Divine Love. "*God is Charity*," hence, since human perfection comes of progressive likeness to God, it follows that it comes of the infusion and exercise of Charity. It is the one abiding gift which never falls away. The Moral Virtues give fitness for the life of blessedness in heaven: Faith and Hope pass into Vision and Embrace, but Charity alone endures. The charity of creatures comprises four degrees, as the ascending scale to the Holiest Himself. There is the love of the Angels, whose choirs attain their zenith in the blessed Seraphim. The sons of light are the sons of fire. "Thou makest thine Angels spirits, and thy ministers a flame of fire" (Psalm CIII. 4). Next in order comes the love of the Blessed, ever actually engrossed in the thought of God, who can never turn their faces away: with them their love is their life, and the outcome of their degree of charity when on earth. But, as St. Thomas teaches, love such as this is beyond man's earthly

powers. "It is not given to man upon earth to think actually of God at all times, ever actually to love Him." The remaining degrees concern us men in our state of pilgrimage below. The charity of earth is twofold: the higher is that of such as embrace and keep the Gospel counsels of perfection, by professing voluntary Poverty, perpetual Chastity, entire Obedience. All are in the state of perfection who thus follow the Master out of love. The lowest rank is of such as are only called to, and are content with, what is of precept, the simple keeping of the Commandments. Thus the Religious State is one of perfection, but actual perfection is the heroism of fulfilment, the bloodless martyrdom of charity.

In Rome during the whole Lent of 1267 our Saint preached in the Old Saint Peter's Basilica: taking Christ's Passion for his theme, he spoke so strongly against public vices that a change of morals was observable on all sides. During the Good Friday sermon he wept aloud, so as to move the whole audience to tears: on the Easter Day and during the Octave he made them all to thrill with joy and hope. As he was passing out through the porch, a woman long afflicted with a flow of blood came behind him, kissed his cloak, and was instantly cured. A remarkable Jewish conversion made in the previous winter stirred the hearts of the Romans. Cardinal d'Annibaldi having secured Thomas for a few days' visit to his country residence at Molara, invited two Rabbis to meet him, to enjoy

his rare gift of conversation. Polite speech soon grew to argument between the well-measured opponents, regarding the Messiah, for it was Christmas Eve. The Rabbis pleaded their cause with learning and earnestness, but all that they could advance was met by clear proofs to the contrary, put before them with all meekness and sincerity. They were so tenacious of their convictions, however, that all he said produced no immediate results: yet at the same time they were so captivated by his manner, that they promised to repeat the visit on the morrow. That night of the Christmas mystery Thomas spent before the new and abiding Bethlehem, "the home of bread," on the altar: where argument failed, prayer prevailed, and on Christmas Day he received them into the Christian fold.

The holy Doctor acknowledged to friends, that, on every Christmas night, he obtained some special favour from God, some vision, or deeper insight into the glories of Christ. His exquisitely tender devotion towards our Lord stands revealed in this prayer:—

"Most tender Jesus, may Thy most sacred Body and Blood be my soul's sweetness and delight, health and holiness in every temptation, joy and peace in every sorrow, light and strength in every word and work, and my last safeguard in death."

St. Thomas was now held in universal esteem as an oracle sent of God: halls and churches were taxed to their utmost capacity to contain his eager auditory, and those listeners were no mere youths,

but Doctors of the schools, Bishops and even Cardinals. He had such mastery over mind and senses that he dictated to four secretaries at the one time on widely different subjects, and was known to dictate still while fast asleep. Such is the testimony of two such secretaries, Reginald of Piperno and Hervey Brito. So capacious was his memory, that he never forgot what he had once read. One evening while dictating the treatise on the Holy Trinity, he held the candle so as to assist the scribe: soon he became so lost in sublime thought that he let the candle burn out in his fingers, without being conscious of the pain.

At Pentecost of the year 1267 he took part in the General Chapter of Bologna, and witnessed the solemn translation of St. Dominic's relics: it was on this occasion that the Pope sent him a Brief requiring him to choose and send two friars to assist the Bishop of Narenta in Dalmatia. The University prayed the Chapter to leave him in Bologna, so he accepted a chair in the public schools. It was a joy for him to live in the home wherein St. Dominic died: many were the nights he spent in prayer before the Holy Father's tomb. It is an interesting fact that he composed the questions on Beatitude and the Beatific Vision in this hallowed spot. Out of consideration for his merits, two new foundations were bestowed upon the order. Archbishop Patricio Matteo gave St. Paul's church in Salerno, with its houses and gardens, "to his friend and former master, Thomas of Aquino". Abbot Bernard of

Monte Cassino, in a Synod of the clergy within his jurisdiction, made over a similar establishment in the town of San Germano.

In 1268 the house of Aquino was restored in its honours and estates, whereat the man of God adored heaven's judgments and designs, even while he poured out thanks. At the request of the Master General he composed a short work on "The Form of Absolution": for the King of Sicily he wrote the first two books of the treatise "On the Government of Princes," but the third and fourth are by some other pen.

Summoned to attend the General Chapter in Paris in the year 1269, at the voice of authority he remained there as Regent of Studies. The world of letters might come to him, if it so listed, but he would not go out to it, being pre-occupied with the moral section of his "Summa". He continued on terms of holy intimacy with St. Louis IX, until that *Preux Chevalier* sailed for the Holy Land in 1270. During his two years' residence in Paris he published these works: "On the Soul"; on "Potentia"; "On the Union of the Word"; "On Spiritual Creatures"; "On the Virtues"; "On Evil".

One day he accompanied the novices to the abbey church of St. Denys, which was the burial place of the Kings of France; there they sat a while to rest upon a hillock, and surveyed the city stretched before them. Hoping to hear some words of wisdom, one of the party observed: "Master, see what a splendid city Paris is; would

you not care to be its lord?" Thomas gazed for a moment, then replied: "I would rather have St. Chrysostom's Homilies on Matthew's Gospel. What could I possibly do with such a city?" "Well Father," rejoined the novice, "you might sell it to the King of France, and build convents for the Friars Preachers in many a place." "In good sooth," said the saint, "I should prefer the Homilies. If I had the government of this city, it would bring me many cares: I could no longer give myself to Divine contemplation, besides depriving myself of spiritual consolations. Experience truly shows this, that the more a man abandons himself to the care and love of temporal things, the more he exposes himself to lose heavenly blessings." "O happy Doctor," exclaims Tocco, "despiser of the world! O lover of heaven! who carried out in conduct what he taught in words, who thus despised earthly things, as if he had already caught a glimpse of the heaven he was looking forward to possess."

A man's character can be accurately measured by his friendships. While bearing himself affably towards all, the Angelic Doctor had but few intimacies, and these were with persons of singular holiness. Now since friendship is based on resemblance, and results in equality and expansiveness, one is not surprised to find that his great heart opened to the learned, many of whom are enrolled with him in the catalogue of the Blessed.

He kept perfect control over his emotional and sensitive faculties. When the rude surgery of the

time required that he should be bled, and once when it was deemed necessary to cauterize his knee with a hot iron, he put himself into a state of contemplation, and felt nothing whatever of the operation. When preaching, he stood firm and erect, the clasped hands resting on the pulpit, the eyes closed, the head upturned and thrown somewhat backwards. At table he often sat lost in thought, with open eyes gazing upwards; it was the same in the garden, the cloister, the cell. He frequently gave this injunction to Reginald, his chief secretary: "Whatever you see happen in me, do not interrupt me". It was in 1270 he completed his Commentary on St. Paul's Epistles, during the composition of which he was favoured with the visible appearance of the Apostle, who came to his assistance in expounding the more abstruse passages.

Recalled to Rome in 1271, he finished the second section of the Second Part of his "Summa" in the peaceful priory on the Aventine hill, and began the Third Part. His time was now devoted to this work, to daily lectures, and to writing a Commentary on Boetius.

St. Thomas possessed a master mind ranging over the whole domain of Philosophy: after seven centuries he is abreast of our times in science, while not a few of our latter-day "*discoveries*" may be read in his pages. The twentieth century has gone back to him for its epistemology, or science of doctrine, to his canon of "*Nihil in intellectu quin prius fuerit in sensu*". With him, ethics is no dry

digest of "*agibilia*," it is the most practical of the sciences, for it is the shaping of human conduct. The political and social economist must consult him for sound economics, as Pope Leo XIII did in his Encyclical "Rerum Novarum"; there in many an eloquent passage he will find as the basis of social economy man's fundamental right of ownership, while the determination falls to the State. In Psychology this sage holds firm for the real distinction between soul and faculties, and between the faculties themselves; feeling is largely identified with will, but he is no patron of Rosminian consciousness as being the soul's nature. It is to St. Thomas we go for the sound philosophical principles of rational physics. His exposition of cosmology, given in the treatise on Creation, which is contained in the First Part of the "Summa Theologica," is out and out more scientific than all theories of atomism, chemical forces of dynamism, or pretended affinities of later days. He is a creationist, and holds to matter and form as the substantialities of things. Primary matter is the subject of all the substantial transformations of the corporeal universe. Substantial form is the likeness of a Divine idea, which, being expressed in matter, constitutes it in a determined substance: as a consequence, the degrees of beings depend on the perfection of forms.

Nature is the first principle of motion and of rest. All primitive substantial forms as well as primary matter must come of creation: his teach-

ing shows the impossibility of our modern biogenesis. The variation of gravity he explains not by addition or subtraction of extraneous particles, but by matter itself becoming rare or dense; hence heaviness is a result of density. He was well acquainted with ether, admitting as he does of an ethereal and most subtle bodily substance everywhere diffused in the interplanetary spaces, as the vehicle and subject of the reciprocal operations of the stars and planets. Such is the explanation of the diffusion of light and heat, in agreement with experience. Ages before Melloni he said: "All light is productive of heat, even the light of the Moon". Those who talk of sex in plants as a modern discovery had better read his "Commentary on the Third Book of 'Sentences'". "In the same plant there is the twofold virtue, active and passive, though sometimes the active is found in one, and the passive in another, so that the one plant is said to be masculine, and the other feminine."[1] He was well acquainted with seminal causes, the laws of qualities, attraction, mechanical activity, and inertia of bodies: in the matter of chemistry there is no substantial discrepancy between his teaching and the true principles of modern science as to substantial transformation.

[1] III, "Sent.," Dist. III, Quest. II, art. 1.

CHAPTER VII.

HIS HEROIC SANCTITY.

OUR saint presented a very noble and striking figure. He was of lofty stature, of heavy build but well proportioned, while his countenance was of our northern complexion, "like the colour of new wheat,' as we read in the deposition for his canonization. The features were comely, the head massive and well shaped, the forehead lofty, and he was slightly bald. Judging from his portrait, the general aspect was calm, sweet, majestic; the deep meditative eyes speak of gentleness, the nose is long and straight, the mouth very firm. Taken altogether, the features reveal the inner charm of his soul.

The earliest known portrait is a superb painting on a panel by an unknown artist of the fifteenth century, now preserved in the Louvre at Paris. A replica of inferior quality is to be seen in the suppressed Carmelite convent at Viterbo. An inscription beneath reads thus: "The true portrait of the Angelic Doctor Saint Thomas Aquinas, as described by a disciple".

He was the saint of sublimest thought, which he nourished with spiritual reading. "In such reading I try to collect devout thoughts, which will lead me easily to contemplation."

The basis of his character and conduct was holy humility. The advice he tendered to others, he

Photo. Alinari.

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS. LUNETTE FRESCO IN CLOISTER OF SAN MARCO, FLORENCE, BY FRA ANGELICO DA FIESOLE.

took to heart himself. "Love of God leads to self-contempt, whereas self-love leads to the contempt of God. If you would raise on high the edifice of holiness, take humility for your foundation." In a moment of confidence he made this candid avowal to Fr. Reginald of Piperno. "Thanks be to God, my knowledge, my title of Doctor, my scholastic work, have never occasioned a single movement of vain glory, to dethrone the virtue of humility in my heart." Dignities he would never accept: he held no office in his Order. He declined the lordly abbacy of Monte Cassino, even though the Pope offered to let him keep his habit of a Friar Preacher. Clement IV tried to secure his acceptance of a Cardinal's hat, and expedited the Brief creating him Archbishop of Naples, but all to no purpose; when death was in view, he uttered this exclamation: "Thanks be to God, I die as a simple religious".

He was very tenacious of poverty; all his journeys were made on foot, his habit was of the poorest, he kept rigidly to the common life. Fr. Nicholas de Marsiliaco has furnished us with this testimony: "I was in Paris with Fr. Thomas, and I declare before God that never have I seen in any man such degree of innocence, such love of poverty. In writing his 'Sum against the Gentiles' he had not sufficient copy-books, so he wrote it on scraps of paper, although he might have had books in abundance, had he been so minded, but he had no concern for temporal affairs." If mitre

and scarlet had no attractions, still less had the rich revenues of an abbey, St. Peter *ad Aram*, in Rome, when offered by Pope Clement. He would keep nothing for his personal use, no chalice, no manuscript, while he held dainties in abhorrence, and practised austerities.

As to obedience, it was one of his sayings that an obedient man is the same as a saint. He was just as prompt and hearty in obeying his Prior as in obeying the Father-General, or our Lord the Pope. A lay-brother in Bologna, having occasion to go out of the convent to make some necessary purchases for the table, had leave to summon the first friar he met to bear him company, as the rule required. St. Thomas was pacing the cloister at the moment, to whom the brother spoke thus: "Good father, the Prior wants you to follow me through the town". Thomas complied, but as they strode through streets and market he was unable to maintain the pace, being slightly lame, for which he was soundly rated more than once. The amazed townsfolk interposed with heated speech, reminding the testy one of his companion's dignity, to say nothing of his infirmity. The simple brother fell at once to his knees to implore forgiveness, for he had no idea of the strange father's name or rank: St. Thomas, however, reassured him by saying that each was simply carrying out an obedience. It was then he uttered the oft-quoted maxim: "Obedience is the perfection of religious life: thereby a man submits himself to his fellow-man

for the love of God, just as God became obedient to men for their salvation ".

With regard to the holy chastity, the Angelic Doctor is both patron and pattern of the angelic virtue : youth and maiden, priest and cloistered soul, acclaim him alike as their model and protector. "Incorruption bringeth nearer to God" (Wisdom, VI. 20). In his "Commentary on St. Paul's 1 Corinthians, " Chapter VII, lesson 6, he rehearses eight blessings of Virginity.

1. It preserves cleanness of the flesh. 2. It beautifies and adorns the soul. 3. It makes like unto the Angels of heaven. 4. It espouses to the Christ. 5. It gives union with and closeness to God. 6. It surpasses other states. 7. It breathes forth the odour of good repute. 8. It invites to the eternal nuptials. Of these the most valuable are the fourth, fifth, and last. It espouses unto the Christ by giving fitness for union with Christ's Body in Holy Communion, and to the priest for making, handling, and dispensing the same. Hence the Poet Virgil places the life-long chaste priest in the Elysian fields.

> Quique sacerdotes casti, dum vita manebat.
> —Æneid, VI. 661.

It gives union with God, and closeness, by bestowing fitness for contemplation. "Where there is cleanness there is understanding;" "What removes a hindrance is an indirect mover," as St. Thomas constantly urges. Chastity lends fitness

for contemplation by removing carnal desires, which so affect the mind's eye that even the truest see sin through a distorted lens. Lastly, it invites to the eternal nuptials. The closer anything approaches to its principle, the more perfect it becomes: but God, Who is our Principle, is a most Pure Spirit: therefore, Chastity leads up to perfection. But our last end is to be one of inseparable union with the all-clean God, as guests at the nuptials of the Lamb; therefore Chastity disposes for such union. The saint lived and died a perfect virgin in mind and body: his heroism in youth drew Angels down from heaven. "He who loves cleanness of heart, for the grace of his lips, shall have the King for a friend" (Proverbs xxii. 11).

The depth of his Divine love, God alone can sound: it was revealed in a measure by his life, but he never spoke of it. "It is a good thing to conceal the King's secret" (Tobias xii. 7). All the world read his heart, his human kindness, his deep friendships. No hard saying ever crossed his lips: he could slay an argument, yet spare a foe. Without guile in his own soul, he could with difficulty be brought to believe in the guilt of others. When he sat in the tribunal of penance, in God's Mercy-seat, it was with a melting heart of pity. Two things he loved especially: these were the Order of Preachers, and God's poor. From love of the brethren he blessed the church bell at Salerno, foretelling that it would toll of itself to give warning of an approaching death. It kept its miraculous

power until it fell and was broken in the seventeenth century.[1] Like St. Dominic he was "ever joyous in the sight of men," uniting the grace of noble manners to the reserve of the religious. He inculcated and observed the remembrance of God's presence. "Be assured," he would say, "that he who walks faithfully in God's presence, and who is ready to give Him an account of his actions, will never be parted from Him by yielding to sin."

Prayer was for him the very breath of his life. Frequently he urged St. Augustine's maxim: "He knows how to live rightly, who has learnt how to pray properly". In the funeral discourse at his obsequies, Fr. Reginald bore this testimony: "During life my Master always prevented me from revealing the wonders which I witnessed. Of this number was his marvellous learning which uplifted him beyond all other men, which he owed less to power of genius than to the efficacy of his prayer. Truly, before studying, or lecturing, reading, writing, or dictating, he began by shutting himself up in secret prayer: he prayed with tears, so as to obtain from God the understanding of His mysteries, and then lights came in abundance to illumine his mind. When he encountered a difficulty, he had recourse to prayer, and all his doubts vanished."

The Angelic teacher was likewise an Angelic singer: nothing but inability from sickness ever kept him from Choir duty. In the opening of his treatise, "On the Separated Substances," that is,

[1] Its power was still attested in 1678.

the Angels, he acknowledges his absence for a time from Divine praise in the Choir, due to frequent attacks of sickness. "Being deprived of assisting at the solemnities of the Angels, we must not allow a time consecrated to devotion to be unoccupied, but rather compensate by study for the loss of assisting at the Divine Office."

His devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary was tender and deep, as evinced by his writings, and by this prayer;—

"Dearest and most blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, overflowing with affection, Daughter of the Sovereign King, and Queen of the Angels: Mother of Him Who created all things, this day and all the days of my life I commend to the bosom of thy regard my soul and my body, all my actions, thoughts, wishes, desires, words, and deeds, my whole life, and my end: so that through thy prayers they may all be ordered according to the will of thy beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Lady most holy, be my helper and my comforter against the attacks and snares of the ancient foe, and of all my enemies."

A few days before his death he told Fr. Reginald that Christ's dear Mother had appeared to him on several occasions, assuring him that his life and writings were pleasing to God, and that he would persevere in his state. St. Vincent Ferrer and St. Antoninus of Florence affirm that in his difficulties he used to turn to her as a child to a mother. Then she would stand visibly before him, and, turning

with a smile to the Divine Babe in her arms, ask Him to bestow the enlightenment he sought.

A complete Mariology has been compiled from his works, drawing out Mary's singular graces.[1] He upheld the privilege of her exemption from original sin. It is an old-established saying, that, "with St. Thomas a man can never be wrong, nor can he be right without him". That he upheld Mary's sinless conception can be established from extrinsic and intrinsic evidences. It is the verdict of his weightiest exponents, such as Capponi de Porrecta, Joannes a Sancto Thoma, Natalis Alexander, John Bromeyard of Oxford, and many more. At the Council of Basle, John of Segobia upheld the Immaculate Conception from St. Thomas's writings. Theologians of first rank have held the same view, such as Vega, Eichof, Nieremberg, Sylveira, Thyrsus Gonzalez, Stefano Chiesa, Plazza, Spada, Cornoldi, Cardinal Sfondrato, Cardinal Lambruschini, etc.

If we open his writings we have the intrinsic evidences of various passages. In his "Opusculum," LXI, *de Dilectione Dei, et Proximi,* we meet this passage: "For the more complete manifestation of His power, the Creator made a mirror which is brightest of the most bright, more polished and more pure than the Seraphim, and of such great purity that there can not be imagined one more pure, except it were God: and this mirror is the person of the most glorious Virgin".

In his "Commentary on the First Book of the

[1] The work of Rev. Dr. Morgott, Ratisbon.

"Sentences,'" he twice makes use of this sentence: "The Blessed Virgin Mary shone with a purity greater than which under God cannot be comprehended." (Dist. XVII, Quest. II, art. 4, 3[m]). Here is his proof: "Increase of purity is to be measured according to withdrawal from its opposite, and since in the Blessed Virgin there was '*depuratio*' from *all* sin, she consequently attained the summit of purity; but yet under God, in Whom there is no capability of defect as is in every creature of itself". And again he writes in Dist. XLIV, Quest. I, art 3: "Purity is increased by withdrawal from its opposite, and consequently some created being can be found *purer than which nothing can be found in creatures*, if never sullied by defilement of sin, and such was the purity of the Blessed Virgin, *who was exempt from original and actual sin*". Some think that the expression "*depuratio*" argues cleansing from stain; but such was not the meaning which St. Thomas attached to the word. The Holy Fathers frequently use this word with regard to God Himself. St. Augustine, Peter Lombard, Fulgentius, Ferrandus, Hugh of St. Victor, also use it of God, while a whole host of writers employ it when speaking of Christ: St. Thomas uses it twice in his treatise on the Incarnation, and Dionysius makes use of it with regard to the heavenly Hierarchies. So then, "*depuratio ab omni peccato*" does not mean "cleansing from all sin," but "exemption from all sin". The Angelic Doctor knew the scientific value of the term used, and his critics do not.

The expression used above "immunis a peccato" is the one employed by Pope Pius IX in proclaiming the dogma.

There is no need to expatiate on the fact that St. Thomas was a consummate logician, and consequently not likely to teach in one part of his writings the contrary to what he lays down in another. In the First Part of the "Summa Theologica," Question XXV, art. 6, ad. 4, he writes: "The Blessed Virgin, in that she is the Mother of God, *has a kind of infinite dignity* from the Infinite Good, which is God, and on this account nothing better than her can be made, just as there is nothing better than God". Again in the Third Part, Question XXVII, art. 3, he says: "The closer a thing approaches to its principle in any order, the more it partakes of the effect of such principle. Hence Dionysius states in the fourth chapter of the 'Heavenly Hierarchies,' that 'the angels being nearer to God, share more fully of the Divine perfections than men do'. But Christ is the principle of grace *authoritatively* according to His Divinity and *instrumentally* in His humanity, as St. John declares in the first chapter (of the Gospel). '*Grace and truth are made through our Lord Jesus Christ.*' But the Blessed Virgin *was closest to Christ* in His humanity, since He drew His human nature from her, and therefore *she ought beyond all others* to receive the fullness of grace from Christ."

From these two passages we gather St. Thomas's teaching as to Mary's prerogatives. 1. She pos-

sessed an almost infinite dignity from her closeness to God, in this surpassing the angels. 2. She *ought*, that is, she had the right, to receive the fullness of Divine grace beyond all other creatures. Since then it is the work of grace to purify the soul by imparting to it the Divine beauty, it follows necessarily that grace wrought absolute sinlessness in her soul, and created boundless holiness. In this dual capacity of closest union with God, and being the appointed instrument of Christ's humanity, she surpassed the angels, who never knew sin : she had a kind of infinitude in merit which none of them ever could have. How then can such teaching of St. Thomas be reconciled with the idea that Mary had ever been sullied for an instant with original sin? Let the theory be once admitted that Mary had been so defiled, then his two principles given above fall to the ground; admit his principles, and the Immaculate Conception is the logical result. The holy Doctor was well aware of the grace bestowed on those pre-eminent saints, Jeremiah and John the Baptist, yet he does not hesitate to place Mary incomparably beyond them, and attributes their sanctification to her as well as to her son. She must then, logically speaking, have received a greater grace than cleansing after conception.

In his exposition of the "Hail Mary" he distinctly declares the doctrine. "Thirdly, she exceeds even the angels in purity: because the Blessed Virgin was not only pure in herself, but even procured purity for others. She was most clean from

fault, because she incurred neither original, nor mortal, nor venial sin."

In his "Commentary on the Epistle to Galatians," III, lect. VI, the original text runs thus: "Of all women I have found none who was altogether exempt from sin, at least from original sin, or venial, except the most pure, and most worthy of all praise, the Virgin Mary".

Again in his "Commentary on the Epistle to Romans": "All men have sinned in Adam, excepting only the most Blessed Virgin, who contracted no stain of Original Sin".

Such are the readings of the first MS. Codices and early printed versions. In a marginal note written by St. Vincent Ferrer in his copy of the "Summa," Part III, Question XXVII, art. 2, ad. 2m, are these words: "The Blessed Virgin was exempt from original and actual sin". It was these original texts of early manuscript Codices which early defenders of the Immaculate Conception quoted for their opinion, such as St. Leonard of Port Maurice, Bernardine de Bustis, B. Peter Canisius, Cardinal Sfondrato, Salmeron, and many more. Weighty theologians such as Velasquez, Peter of Alva, Eusebius Nieremberg, Frassen, Lambruschini, Gual, and Palmieri, following the critical method of Hermeneutics, have held and shown that many passages of St. Thomas have been changed or interpolated. Let it suffice to adduce three apologetic writers who denounce such practices, and vindicate the purity of his text. Bishop Vialmo, a Friar Preacher:

"Pro defensione Sancti Thomæ"; Egidius Romanus, a disciple of St. Thomas "Castigatorium: in corruptorem librorum S. Thomæ Aquinatis"; Cardinal Sfondrato: "Innocentia Vindicata"; besides seven more apologists.

Some of the Angelic Doctor's neat sayings caught in familiar conversation have been preserved. "The poverty of a discontented religious is a useless expense." "The prayerless soul makes no progress whatever." "A religious without prayer resembles a soldier fighting without weapons." "Idleness is the devil's hook, on which any bait is tempting." "I cannot understand how anyone conscious of mortal sin can laugh or be merry." When asked how to detect a spiritual-minded man, he gave this reply: "He who is constantly chattering about frivolous things, who fears being despised, who is weary of life, whatever marvels he may work, I do not look on him as a perfect man, since all he does is without foundation, and he who cannot suffer is ready for a fall". To his sister Theodora, inquiring how to become a saint, he replied with a single word, "*Velle*," or "*Resolve*".

It is not surprising that one so clean of heart and full of charity should be favoured with visions, or that the dead should make an appeal to his pity. Thus, in earlier years he foresaw the triumph of the Mendicant Friars, while they were being subjected to persecution. "A Doctor of Theology in Paris, a man of great reputation and learning, and one who rendered signal services to the Church,

during the time that the Master-General was doing battle for the order in the Roman Court, at the trying period when bitter enmity prevailed against the brethren, saw in a dream a great concourse of friars looking up to heaven, who called out to him; 'Look! Look!' He also gazed upwards, and saw these words emblazoned in letters of gold upon the sky: 'The Lord has delivered us from our enemies, and from the hands of all them that hated us'. At that very time the Brief issued by Pope Innocent against the Mendicant Friars was recalled by Alexander his successor, through the favour of the Most High" (Gerard de Frachet, "Lives of the Brethren," Book IV, Chap. XXIII.).

His deceased sister, Marietta, the Abbess of Capua, appeared to him in Paris in the year 1272, to commend her soul to his prayers: some time later she reappeared in Rome to tell him that she was admitted to glory. When he inquired about his dead brothers Raynald and Landulf, she assured him that the former was already in paradise, but that the latter was still in purgatory. Then, emboldened, he put the question as to whether he would himself die before long, and secure his eternal salvation. To this she replied: "You will be saved, if you but persevere, but you will attain your last end very differently from us; you will speedily join us, but your glory will quite surpass ours". Shortly after this he was consoled by the vision of an angel displaying a book, on which the names of the saints were written in golden letters

on an azure ground, and among them he saw Raynald's name among the martyrs. The angel disappeared, and Raynald stood visibly before him. "How do I stand with God?" was our saint's first question. "You are in a good state, my brother. Such a query is unbecoming, because you are in the sure way which leads to life. Hold fast to what you now have, and finish as you have begun: learn also for a certainty, that none of your Order, or very few, will be lost."

CHAPTER VIII.

HIS WRITINGS; THIRD PERIOD: AND DEATH.

THE completion of the Moral Section of the "Summa" raised St. Thomas to the height of fame. The Universities of Paris, Bologna, and Naples, sent eager applications to have him, addressed to the General Chapter sitting in Florence during the Pentecost-tide of 1272. Rome lost him, as there was no reigning Pontiff to retain him, and Naples won him. The Capitular fathers assigned him to teach in Naples University, at the earnest suit of Charles, King of Sicily, the brother of St. Louis, who contributed two ounces of gold per month for his maintenance. Late in the month of August, Thomas quitted Rome in company with his brethren Reginald of Piperno and Bartholomew of Lucca.

All three fell sick of malaria at Cardinal d'Annibaldi's residence in the Campagna. Thomas

speedily recovered, but his companions lay in grave danger of their lives, so, drawing from his neck a relic of St. Agnes, he applied it with his blessing, whereat they rose instantly in perfect health.

The home-coming of the Angelic Doctor to Naples was a veritable triumph. Five miles beyond the city he was met by princes, senators, professors, and the ever-clamorous youth of a University; an immense concourse of citizens filled the festive streets, roaring out their ovation, while the reverend magistracy conducted him to his convent of San Domenico Maggiore. Such demonstrations deeply wounded his humility: fortunately for himself his habitual recollection of thought kept him unconscious of the respectful salutions which greeted his every appearance in the public streets. Shortly after his arrival the Cardinal Legate of Sicily and the Archbishop of Capua, a former disciple, went to consult with him on matters of grave moment: on being informed of their arrival, the holy Doctor descended from his cell to the open cloister, but so rapt in thought that he passed them unnoticed. Presently his face brightened, and they heard him exclaim: "I have hit upon the solution I was looking for". The Cardinal looked shocked for a moment at the apparent discourtesy, until the Archbishop assured him that such moments of abstraction were priceless to the Church; then, pulling Thomas by the sleeve, he roused him from his reverie. Then only did the man of God observe them, and in simple language

explained the mystery of his joyful mien. "It was merely because an excellent argument on a long-debated subject occurred just then to my mind, whose inner contemplation was expressed on my joyful countenance."

His end was close at hand, like a goal in sight; the words from the world behind the veil were vividly impressed on his memory: "You will speedily join us". In his cell he prayed and wrote, then passed forth to lecture in the University, in whose *Aula Maxima* he delivered the treatises of the Third Part of the "Summa Theologica," beginning with the Incarnation. The pulpit and chair from which he lectured were preserved for centuries after, together with his statue in marble in the outer atrium, where a marble slab bore this inscription:—

"Before passing in, pay reverence to this statue, and to the chair from which Saint Thomas pronounced so many oracles to a countless throng of students, for the glory and happiness of his age".

Every morning he said mass at an early hour in St. Nicholas Chapel, after which he heard another; he made his thanksgiving still vested in alb and girdle, but when he served mass, he resumed the black cappa. At the moment of consecration he used his favourite ejaculation: "*Tu Rex gloriæ, Christe: Tu Patris sempiternus es Filius*". His Vesper hour of life had come, and he welcomed it: during the year 1273 his raptures became more and more frequent; seldom he went out, except to

deliver the daily lecture. Now that the Commentary on Boetius was finished, his philosophic labours were ended. His pre-occupying theme now was the Sacred Godhead. As revealed in prophecy, it is the gist of his exposition of Isaiah: as revealed in the Incarnation and Redemption, it is the burden of the "Summa" in its concluding part. One night his friend and secretary, Reginald, who occupied the cell next to his, heard him talking in a loud tone as if engaged in animated conversation, which was the more remarkable since it was being carried on in time of profound silence. After a while Thomas came to his cell and bade him to get up. "Light the lamp, and bring the manuscript which I have begun upon Isaiah:" for a long space of time he dictated rapidly, then told him to retire again to rest. Reginald then threw himself upon his knees, and besought him to tell with whom he had been conversing. Finally, in God's dear name and in the name of their friendship, he adjured him to speak. "Dear son," replied the saint, "for many days past you have witnessed my affliction of spirit. I had misgivings over a passage in the text I have been commenting upon, so that I besought God with tears to give me understanding. Now this very night God has had compassion upon me, sending me His blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, who have brought me complete light. And now, in God's name, I command you to keep absolute silence as to this fact, during my lifetime."

After the Commentary on Isaiah he wrote his

Exposition of the first fifty-one Psalms. During the Lent of this year he preached every day in the Cathedral upon the words, "*Hail full of grace, the Lord is with thee*," giving a summary of Mary's rare privileges. The Compline hour at home filled him with the deepest devotion: tears coursed freely during the singing of the Lenten anthem: "*Cast us not off in the season of our old age, when our strength shall fail us: Lord God, do not forsake us*". As he was praying in the choir, he saw before him the figure of Father Romanus, to whom he had relinquished his chair in Paris. "Welcome indeed, dear brother," said he; "but when did you arrive here?" "I have passed from life," said the dead friar, "but I am permitted to appear on your account." St. Thomas was much overcome, but recovering self-possession, put these apt questions: "How do I stand with God, and are my works pleasing to Him?" "Thou art in a good state, and thy works are pleasing to God." "What then of thyself?" asked the holy Doctor. "I am in bliss," replied Romanus, "but have passed sixteen days in Purgatory." "Tell me then," cried Thomas, "how do the Blessed see God, and do our acquired habits abide with us in heaven?" "It is enough," answered Romanus, "if I tell you that I see God: ask me no more: '*As we have heard, so have we seen, in the city of the Lord of Hosts*':" saying which he vanished. The Angelic Doctor at once gave voice to his conclusion: "therefore it is by specular vision that the Blessed see God".

The servant of God was permitted at times to penetrate men's hidden thoughts: one such instance was when he rebuked a friar for leaving the choir to indulge in gluttony. As he was pacing the terrace conversing with a nobleman, the devil appeared under the guise of a negro: "How dare you come here to tempt me!" he shouted as he advanced with clenched fist; whereupon the fiend vanished.

The year 1273 was drawing to a close when the pen dropped from his hand, before reaching his fiftieth year. It was on St. Nicholas Day, the 6th day of December, and in that saint's chapel, that he had a long ecstasy while saying Mass; what was then communicated to him he never revealed, but from that hour "he suspended his writing instruments," as William de Tocco puts it. Frequently he had been observed to be raised several cubits in the air, while engaged in prayer. Directly the treatise on the Eucharist was finished, some two months before this, Fr. Dominic di Caserta and other friars saw him thus uplifted in St. Nicholas Chapel shortly before Matins; but what filled them with awe was the miraculous voice proceeding from the mouth of the crucifix over the altar. "Thomas, thou hast written well of Me; what reward wilt thou have?" To which the holy man at once replied: "None other but Thyself, Lord". Mid-way in the treatise of the Sacrament of Penance, after finishing ninety Questions, of five hundred and forty-nine articles, he lapsed into silence. To every appeal made by

superiors or brethren there came the same reply: "I can do no more". Fr. Reginald, his secretary and confidant, urged him to resume his task. "Father, why do you leave unfinished this great work, which you have undertaken for God's glory and the world's enlightenment?" But he could only draw the reply: "I can do no more. Such secrets have been communicated to me, that all I have written and taught seem to me to be only like a handful of straw." Few could credit the report that the great oracle would speak no more; none imagined that the sun was setting, and in part already below the horizon. Nobly has Dante sung of him in his "Paradiso," Canto X:—

> Such his wisdom upon earth,
> Like to the Cherubim in lustre glowed.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> One of the lambs of that blest flock was I
> Which Dominic so leads in righteous ways,
> They thrive, unless they fall by vanity.

The "Summa Theologica" was his legacy to the Church.[1]

Fr. Reginald was obliged to feed him now, owing to his constant abstraction and frequent raptures. Before the Christmas festival St. Thomas

[1] A study of this monumental work has wrought many remarkable conversions, such as Rabbi Paul of Burgos, in the fifteenth century; Theobald Thamer, a disciple of Melanchthon; the Calvinist, Duperron, afterwards Cardinal and Archbishop of Sens. It has earned Luther's invectives, as well as Bucer's menace: "Take away Thomas, and I will destroy the Church".

spent a week with his sister, the Countess of San Severino, during which time they had but one long conversation, and that was about the joys of life everlasting. "What can have happened to my brother," she inquired of Reginald of Piperno, "that he is so entranced, and will not speak to me?" On his return to Naples he fell ill of fever; the attendant informed the prior that during the night he perceived a brilliant star enter by the window, and rest for a long time on the sleeper's head.

In obedience to Pope Gregory's summons to attend at the General Council of Lyons, which was to open on 1 May, St. Thomas quitted Naples on 28 January, 1274, taking with him by papal command his treatise "Against the Errors of the Greeks". He set out on foot, having for companions the trusty Reginald and another friar; so pre-occupied was he in thought, that, as they descended from Terracina along the Borgo Nuovo road, he struck his head violently against a fallen tree and lay stunned for some time. From that moment Reginald never left his side, but sought to occupy his mind by agreeable conversation. "Master, you are going to the Council on behalf of our order and of the kingdom of Naples." "God grant that I may see this great good accomplished," was the reply. "And furthermore," pursued Reginald, "they will make you a Cardinal, like Friar Bonaventure, so that both of you will be of great service to the Orders of which you are members." To this came the prophetic reply, confirmed by the event:

"There is no state in which I can be of more use to my Order than that in which I am at present: rest assured that I shall never change my state of life". They halted for a few hours at Aquino; there he received a letter from the Abbot of Monte Cassino, soliciting his interpretation of a point of Rule, to which he returned a gracious reply. Owing to his failing strength, a mule was procured, upon which he rode to visit his niece, the Countess Francesca Ceccano at Maienza Castle. There he fell ill, and could take no food; it was now the season of Lent, and, since he would not break the law of abstinence, the doctor begged of him to say if there was any kind of food he could relish. "I have several times eaten in France a kind of fish called herring," said he; "but it is rare and very dear in these parts." His physician, John de Guido, sought vainly for the fish, until chancing to meet a fisherman coming from Terracina, he found some herrings at the bottom of a creel of sardines. Then Reginald coaxed him to eat some of the herrings. "From whence do they come?" asked the holy Master. "It is God who has sent them," was the reply; but all the same he would not partake of them, for fear of indulging in a delicacy. He tarried five days in Maienza Castle, and was able to say mass twice: the Abbot and some of the Cistercians from Fossa Nuova Abbey came to pay their respects. Thomas was now extremely ill, but persisted in fulfilling his obedience by proceeding onwards to the Council. Once more he mounted upon the mule,

and the little party of ten moved slowly on to the Abbey, just seven miles away. Reverently they lifted him and carried him at his request into the church, for his last visit to the Blessed Sacrament: after a short prayer he was again taken up and carried through the cloisters to the Abbot's own apartments. Reginald had besought him not to quit Maienza Castle, where he could have every remedy and attention, but the saint would not listen to the proposal. "If the Lord wishes to take me, it is better that I should be found in a religious house than in the establishment of the laity." He entered Fossa Nuova Abbey on 10 February; as he was borne through the cloisters he uttered the saying of the Psalmist: "This is my rest for ever: here I shall dwell, for I have chosen it" (Psalm CXXXI. 14). The good Cistercians lavished every attention upon him, cutting and carrying faggots for the fire. "Whence comes this honour," he cried, in distress of humility, "that holy men should carry wood for my fire! Whence comes it that God's servants should wait upon me, and carry a burden so far, which must be painful to them!" Very speedily the tidings reached Naples that his dissolution was at hand; soon the Abbey was thronged with nobility and clergy and brethren, importuning to see him but once again. Among the Friars Preachers came his younger brother Rayner, who afterwards became Archbishop of Messina in Sicily.[1]

[1] The Bullarium Ordinis Prædicatorum, Tome II, gives him among the prelates promoted by Pope Honorius IV.

During an interval of the intermittent fever the Cistercians besought him to dictate an exposition of the Canticle of Canticles. "Give me St. Bernard's spirit, and I will do so," said he. Touched by their kindness, he complied: supported on his bed, he dictated the Commentary as Reginald read each succeeding verse, while eager hands committed it to writing. This, let it be observed, was his second exposition of Solomon's Song; it is entitled "Sonet vox tua," whereas the first is entitled "Salomon inspiratus". This second work must be accepted rather as the fruit of his piety than of his learning. His biographer, William de Tocco, makes this observation on the fact: "It was fitting that the great Doctor, now about to be released from the body, should finish his teaching by the Canticle of Love between Jesus Christ and the faithful soul". The last words dictated were a passage from St. Paul, so fully realized in himself: "*Our conversation is in heaven: for in every place we are unto God the good odour of Christ*". On coming to the eleventh verse of the seventh chapter —"*Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the fields*," he swooned away, for his end was near. As the lamp of vitality was burning low, he received the

"Frater Raynerius de Aquino, germanus frater Doctoris Angelici S. Thomæ, Archiepiscopus Messanus, Messina in Sicilia." See also Bernard Guidonis, de Episcopis Siciliæ; Cavalerius, de Episcopis Ord. Præd., Tom. I, p. 46, no. cxxxv; Stephanus Sanpayo, ex. MSS. Archivii Cænobii Neapolitani S. Dominici.

last anointing after confessing to Fr. Reginald. The Abbot then brought him the Sacred Viaticum, while the brethren knelt around. Upborne in Reginald's arms the dying saint made this protestation of faith: "If in this world there be any knowledge of this mystery keener than that of faith, I wish now to use it to affirm that I believe in the real presence of Jesus Christ in this Sacrament, truly God and truly man, the Son of God, the Son of the Virgin Mary. This I believe and hold for true and certain. This faith is in my heart, and I profess it with my lips, just as the priest has pronounced it."

To Fr. Reginald it seemed impossible that St. Thomas should die thus early, when only entering upon his fiftieth year, so he used every art to rouse him, especially by dwelling on the great work which was before him in the coming Council, and of the sure honours which awaited him. Then with dying breath the holy Doctor made his last reply: "My son, keep yourself from harbouring any such thoughts, or from troubling yourself in this matter. What used to be at one time the object of my desires, is now a matter of thanksgiving. What I have ever been asking of God He now grants to me this day, in withdrawing me from this life in the same state in which it pleased His mercy to place me. Without a doubt I might have made further progress in learning, and have made my learning to be more profitable to others, by sharing with them what has been manifested to me. But the

infinite goodness of my God has let me know, that if, without any merit of my own, I have received more graces and lights than other Doctors who have lived a long while, it is because the Lord wished to shorten the days of my exile, and to take me the sooner to be a sharer in His glory, out of a pure act of mercy. If you love me sincerely, be content and comforted, since my own consolation is perfect."

After receiving the holy Viaticum he closed his eyes, and was silent for a short time, then repeated aloud his devout Rhythm—

> Adoro Te devote latens deitas
> Quæ sub his figuris vere latitas.

He uttered this Divine song to the finish, and yielded up his soul in the early morning of 7 March, 1274.

Photo. Alinari.

ALTAR-PIECE BY GUERCINO, IN THE CHAPEL OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, CHURCH OF ST. DOMINIC, BOLOGNA

PART IV: THE NIGHT OF REST.

"And night shall be my light in the fullness of my delights."—Psalm CXXXVIII, 11.

CHAPTER IX.

MIRACLES AND CANONIZATION

THE holy body was reverently carried beyond the cloister for the consolation of the Countess Francesca and female friends, after which it was laid out in the choir, with the face exposed. A great concourse of the faithful flocked to the church; such as were not permitted to enter the chancel touched the coffin with olive branches, which they kept as relics. The Requiem Mass was sung by the Bishop of Terracina, who was a Franciscan, in the presence of the Abbot and Cistercians, the Friars Preachers and Friars Minor. Fr. Reginald of Piperno pronounced the funeral discourse, broken with sobs, as he removed the veil which had concealed a life of consummate holiness. At its conclusion he made formal protest that he

only left the body until further arrangements should be made by the Master General of the Order. Then, amid a universal wail, the earthly shrine of Thomas Aquinas was removed, and buried in a vault under the high altar. When tidings of his death reached Lyons, the Pope and Cardinals were filled with profound grief; the Holy Father ordered his treatise "Against the Errors of the Greeks" to be sent on to the Council. The saying of Eliphaz, recorded in Job v. 26, was realized in St. Thomas. "*Thou shalt enter into the grave in abundance, as a sheaf of wheat which is brought in its season*".

The Cistercians of Fossa Nuova saw a great light over the Abbey for three days, which passed away at his death. The same marvel was beheld over the Dominican priory at Cologne. At the moment of his death one of the Cistercians engaged in prayer in the Abbey church saw St. Thomas's soul mount to heaven like a radiant star.

At the same moment Master Albert in Cologne turned to Fr. Albert of Brescia, exclaiming with tears: "My son in Christ, Thomas of Aquino, the light of the Church, is dead, as God has revealed to me. He was the world's flower and glory, and has rendered superfluous the writings of Doctors who shall come after him."

At Anagni, Fr. Raymund Maturi, while asleep a few nights after this, had a vision in which he saw St. Thomas, duly vested, proceed to the altar and say mass. What struck him as singular was the fact that his right eye appeared to be larger than

the other. The saint explained the wonder, with these words: "My son, the knowledge which I enjoy in heaven is greater than what I had on earth, just as my right eye is greater than my left one".

Fr. Paul of Aquila beheld this vision while praying in the church of San Domenico at Naples. He saw Thomas seated in his professorial chair, teaching a crowd of disciples. Presently St. Paul appeared with a number of the saints, who conversed familiarly with him. He distinctly heard Thomas ask St. Paul if he had rightly interpreted his Epistles, whereat the Apostle replied: "Yes, so far as anyone in the mortal body can understand them; but come away with me, and I will conduct you to a place where you will have clearer understanding of all things". Then grasping the holy Doctor by his cloak, St. Paul led him away. Then Fr. Paul shouted aloud: "Alas! Alas! Alas! our Doctor is taken from us!"

Fr. Albert of Brescia, a professor at Cologne, poured out many and frequent prayers, especially to the Blessed Virgin and to St. Augustine, that he might ascertain the Angelic Doctor's degree of glory. As he was kneeling before the altar, he beheld two figures before him, one wearing a Mitre, and the other clad in the Dominican habit: they were St. Augustine of Hippo and Fr. Thomas Aquinas. St. Thomas's habit was resplendent with precious stones, while on his head he bore a crown of gold and diamonds. From his neck there hung two chains, one of gold and one of silver; on his breast was a

large carbuncle stone flashing rays of light like a sun. Then the figure with the mitre addressed him. "Why are you astonished, Fr. Albert? God has heard your prayer. I declare to you that I am Augustine, a Doctor of the Church, sent to acquaint you of the glory of Thomas Aquinas, who is reigning with me. He is my son, because he followed the teaching of the Apostle, and my own, and he has illumined the Church with his learning. This is signified by the precious stones with which he is adorned. The shining jewel on his breast denotes the uprightness of intention with which he defended and proclaimed the Faith: the other jewels represent the books and writings of all kinds which he composed. Thomas is my equal in glory, but surpasses me by the aureola of Virginity."

Eleutherius, a Franciscan theologian of repute, was also favoured with a vision. He beheld the Mother of God seated in glory, while beneath stood St. Francis with St. Thomas, whose cappa was studded with stars. Pointing to St. Thomas, the Seraphic Father spoke thus to Eleutherius: "Confide in this man, for his teaching shall never pass away".

God revealed the saint's glory by very many miracles, ninety-six of which were duly attested, and submitted as evidence for his canonization. While his body lay exposed in the Abbey Choir, the Subprior, John de Ferentino, who was completely blind, placed his eyes against those of the saint, and instantly saw. The holy Doctor's cell in

Naples became a resort of pilgrims, one of whom, the renowned Egidius Romanus, uttered the phrase: "I am come to adore in the place where his feet have stood". Master Albert of Cologne could never hear his name mentioned without breaking into tears. Learning that his doctrine was impugned in Paris, although over 80 years of age, he proceeded thither on foot with Hugh de Lucca in 1276, and defended St. Thomas's teaching warmly before the University. "What a glory it is," he exclaimed, "for the living to be praised by the dead!" After representing the saint as being endowed with life while all others were covered with the shades of death, he poured forth a splendid eulogy of his doctrines as resplendent with orthodoxy and piety, and declared himself ready to meet any opponent. He did the same at Cologne, declaring that by his writings Thomas had laboured for all to the end of time.

Owing to the pressure of Church affairs of graver importance, little beyond collecting of evidence was done towards the canonization under the brief pontificates of the Dominican Popes, Blessed Innocent V, and Blessed Benedict XI. Innocent spoke of him in terms of no common praise: "The teaching of this Doctor beyond all others has fitness of terms, manner of expression, and soundness of opinions; so that he who holds it will never swerve from the path of truth: while, on the contrary, he who attacks it must always be suspected". Benedict invariably styled him: "My Master; my Doctor".

The solemn process of canonization was begun in 1318, promoted by Robert, King of Sicily, and supported by petitions from the Universities, the hierarchy, clergy, and the Order of Preachers. The official testimonies to be presented to the Pope at Avignon were entrusted to Friars William de Tocco and Robert de Benevento; as they were proceeding to France by sea, a great storm arose, and the ship was being carried towards the rocks, when they prayed aloud to St. Thomas to preserve them; the wind then veered round, and they reached land safely. On delivering up the documents, Pope John XXII accepted them eagerly, and thus addressed the prelates and friars: "We do not doubt that Br. Thomas is already glorious in heaven, his life having been saintly, and his doctrine miraculous". Three days later, in Consistory, he again reverted to it. "Venerable Brethren: We deem it a great glory for ourselves and for the whole Church, to inscribe this servant of God in the catalogue of the saints." The decree was then read introducing the cause of canonization, and three prelates appointed as Commissioners to examine the evidence of miracles; these were Humbert, Archbishop of Naples; Angelo, Bishop of Viterbo, and Pandulf, an Apostolic Notary. Heaven now aided the cause by striking miracles. The Archbishop of Naples was suffering from an incurable ulcer: he now commended himself to the saint's intercession before retiring to rest, and in the morning it was gone, leaving only a red

mark. The Bishop of Viterbo fell ill of a violent fever, and lay at the point of death: he also prayed with confidence to the Angelic Doctor, slept peacefully, and awoke in perfect health. The same thing happened to Matthew, the chaplain of the Archbishop of Naples. Two further Commissions sat, at Naples and at Fossa Nuova, to substantiate the evidence of miracles. While these reports were being examined at Avignon, another singular miracle was wrought by the saint's intercession. Mary d'Arnaud, the Pope's niece, lay at the point of death from dropsy, so the Holy Father sent her the last blessing by the Bishop of Lodevi. It so chanced that the Bishop was a Dominican, who recommended her to have recourse to St. Thomas. She did so fervently, and during the night saw some one draw nigh to her bed, whom she took to be the Bishop. "Do you wish to be cured?" asked the visitor. "I am not the Bishop, but Brother Thomas Aquinas, to whom you have had recourse: fulfil the vow you have made, and you will recover." In the morning she found herself in perfect health.

Three Dominican Cardinals completed the final stages of the process with zeal and fervour: these were Nicholas Aubertin, Nicholas de Freauville, and William de Godieu.

The day appointed for St. Thomas's canonization was 18 July, 1323. The preliminary ceremony began in the Dominican Church in Avignon on the day before, in the presence of Pope John

XXII, the Cardinals, very many Archbishops and Bishops, King Robert of Sicily, his mother Queen Mary, many princes, nobles, and ambassadors. The Pope pronounced a grand eulogium of the saint's works and merits, grounded on this text: "*This is a day of good tidings: if we hold our peace, and do not tell it to the morning, we shall be charged with crime: come, let us go and tell it in the King's court*" (4 Kings VII. 9).

King Robert of Sicily, a relative of the saint, then gave an address, showing how St. Thomas had merited the honour bestowed, because he had been, and would ever continue to be, "*a burning and a shining light*" (St. John v. 35).

The Archbishop of Capua followed with a panegyric, who was succeeded by Fr. Raymund Bequin, the Master of the Sacred Palace; further orations were delivered by the Archbishop of Arles, the Bishops of London, Winchester, and others.

On the morning of 18 July the Pope had the Bull of canonization read, assigning 7 March for the feast, after which he sang the votive mass of St. Thomas in the Cathedral of Notre Dame des Doms, and pronounced another eulogium. "His doctrine was not other than miraculous," cried the Pontiff. "He has enlightened the Church more than all other Doctors, and more profit can be gained in a single year by the study of his works, than by devoting a lifetime to that of other theologians. He has wrought as many miracles as he has written Articles."

CHAPTER X.

TRANSLATIONS OF HIS RELICS.

FROM the day of his departure, petitions were addressed to the Holy See for the privilege of possessing his incorrupt body: the King of Sicily and the Counts of Aquino and San Severino did so by title of kinship, the Universities of Paris and Naples by reason of his services rendered in life, and his own Order by right of sonship. The Cistercians of Fossa Nuova, however, kept their treasure for close upon a century; since their church had become a sanctuary renowned for miracles, they refused to part with what Providence had sent them.

In October, 1274, Abbot James and two monks secretly removed the body to St. Stephen's Chapel in the cloister, for which the saint rebuked them in a dream: incautiously they opened the coffin, whereupon a marvellous perfume exhaled which penetrated the cells and church, and the deceit practised was exposed. All saw him as if but reposing in sleep: as they carried him back to the church a marvellous light shone around. Abbot Peter translated the body to a befitting tomb in the choir in 1279, situated on the Gospel side of the high altar. The right hand, still perfectly intact and giving forth a delightful odour, was cut off in 1284 and bestowed on his sister the Countess of San Severino, who placed it in a silver reliquary:

her son, Thomas, afterwards gave it to the Dominicans of Salerno.

Early in the year 1304, in consequence of a report that Pope Benedict XI meant to restore the remains to the Friars Preachers, the Cistercians amputated the head and placed it in a tabernacle behind the choir; the body, still exhaling the same fragrance, they deposited in a massive chest for secret concealment. It was privately conveyed to the Chapel of the Count of Fondi, another kinsman of the holy Doctor. The Lord of Piperno, who was at feud with him, resolved on carrying off the treasure, so as to extort a heavy ransom. Philip, King of Sicily, now sent an embassy of bishops and nobles, together with a great donation of gold, in order to secure the holy remains, alleging his claim of descent from the Aquinos: but the Count of Fondi would not deliver them up. Years went past, until St. Thomas admonished the Count that his relics were not in their proper place. His mother, who had been healed at his intercession, was praying with the Bishop of Fondi before the great chest, when both beheld him emerge as a living man, and after walking for a short time in silence, laid himself down again to rest. In consequence of this, the Count resigned the body to the Dominicans of Fondi, who placed it in their church. Here, for the second time, St. Thomas came forth visibly before Father Raymund. The Cistercians addressed a complaint to Pope Urban V, who ordered an investigation to be made as to

BODY OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS (IN CHÂSSE ABOVE ALTAR), REMOVED FROM DOMINICAN CHURCH AT THE REVOLUTION TO THE CHAPEL OF THE HOLY GHOST, CHURCH OF ST. SERNIN, TOULOUSE.

the respective claims of the two Orders; the rights of the Friars Preachers were warmly urged by the Queen of Sicily, the Count of Aquino, and the Dominican Cardinals. The Father General, Elias of Toulouse, then went direct to the Pope. "You come at the right time," said Urban; "it is you who stole the body of St. Thomas." "Holy Father," answered Elias, "*he is our brother and our flesh.*" "And where then have you ordered it to be deposited?" pursued the Pontiff. "Nowhere, Most Holy Father: that shall be as you decide." Nothing was then decided; within a few days the Court moved to Montefiascone, at Whitsuntide, whither Father Elias followed on Corpus Christi Day. "Holy Father," said he, "to-day's solemnity reminds me that St. Thomas composed the Office of the Blessed Sacrament by order of Pope Urban. Since you bear the same name, I beseech you to grant to the Saint the honour he deserves, and that his body shall rest among his brethren, who will reverence him more than any others." Raising his voice, the Pope gave solemn sentence. "By the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, and our own, I give and grant to you, the Master General, and to the Order of Friars Preachers, the body of St. Thomas Aquinas, a religious of this Order, to be placed at Toulouse, or Paris, as shall be decided by the General Chapter or the Master General. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." All present then answered "*Amen!*" Next day the Pope

fixed upon Toulouse, as being the cradle of the order. Learning that the head was still at Fossa Nuova, he continued: "And I also give you St. Thomas's head, that it may be translated with the body".

On 4 August, 1368, the head and body were laid in the papal chapel at Montefiascone, and solemnly delivered over to the Master General's keeping. The relics reposed for a month with the Dominican Sisters at Prouille, and many were the miracles wrought on the way. On 28 January, 1369, they were solemnly conveyed to the Dominican Church in Toulouse by Louis Duke of Anjou, many prelates, and a concourse of 150,000 persons. The festival of his Translation became a day of precept for the diocese. His right arm was bestowed on Paris University, and was placed by King Charles in the Dominican Church, in St. Thomas's Chapel; at the Great Revolution it was conveyed to Rome, and now rests in the Minerva Church. The chief bone of his left arm was given to his brethren in Naples, who transferred it to the Cathedral in 1603.

In 1628 a magnificent shrine, with altars at the four sides, was erected in Toulouse. At the Great Revolution it was thrown down, and the remains, draped with the Republican flag, conveyed for safety by the Constitutional clergy to an obscure corner in St. Sernin's crypt. They were exposed for veneration in 1805; the sacred head was enclosed in a new reliquary in the year 1852. On

24 July, 1878, the Archbishop of Toulouse, Monseigneur Desprez, after judicial verification of the relics, enclosed them in a superb sarcophagus of gold and silver.

EPILOGUE.

COMMENDATIONS OF HIS DOCTRINE.

In the Council of Trent, Master John Gallio de Burgos eulogized his writings: "The name of the Angelic Doctor, already so renowned throughout the Christian world, will be held in still higher veneration by posterity from the honour and *cultus* which you have been pleased to bestow upon him here. St. Thomas had not the honour of assisting at a General Council during his lifetime, but he still lives on after death. He is present with you in the spiritual treasures of his writings, bequeathed to you as a rich heritage. In this sense we can rest assured that no Council has ever been held in the Church since his blessed death, at which the holy Doctor has not been present, and has not been consulted."

Pope St. Pius V proclaimed him Doctor of the Church in the year 1567. The Vatican Council of 1870 likewise placed his "Summa" on the altar.

On 4 August, 1879, Pope Leo XIII published the Encyclical "*Æterni Patris*," dwelling on the importance of basing Christian dogma on sound

Philosophy. "Amongst the Scholastic Doctors, the Prince and Master of all, Thomas Aquinas, shines with incomparable splendour. Enriched with all Divine and human sciences, justly compared to the sun, he reanimates the earth by the bright rays of his virtues, while filling it with the splendour of his doctrine. Distinguishing accurately between reason and faith, he unites them in the bonds of perfect concord, while preserving the rights and maintaining the dignity of each. So then, reason, upborne on the wings of Thomas, can soar no higher, while faith can obtain from reason no more numerous and efficacious helps than those furnished by Thomas.

"We cannot wonder then at the immense enthusiasm of former ages for the writings of the Angelic Doctor. Nearly all the founders and legislators of Religious Orders have ordered their subjects to study the doctrine of St. Thomas, and to keep to it religiously: they have provided beforehand that no one amongst them should depart with impunity, even in the least point, from the teaching of so great a man."

Another Brief followed on 4 August, 1880. "In virtue of our supreme authority, for the glory of Almighty God, and the honour of the Angelic Doctor, for the advancement of learning and the common welfare of human society, we declare the Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas Aquinas, Patron of all Universities, Academies, Colleges, and Catholic

Schools: and we desire that he should be venerated and honoured as such by all."

O Thoma, laus et gloria
Prædicatorum Ordinis,
Nos transfer ad cælestia
Professor sacri Numinis.

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